

Desolate Era

(莽荒纪)

Book 21

The Bloodlotus Blooms

I Eat Tomatoes

(我吃西红柿)

Story Description:

Fate had never been kind to Ji Ning. Wracked by illnesses and infirm his entire life on Earth, Ning knew early on that he would die as a teenager. What he didn't know was that there really was such a thing as life after death, and that the multiverse was a far larger place than he thought. A lucky twist of fate (one of the few in Ning's life) meant that Ning was reborn into a world of Immortals and monsters, of Ki Refiners and powerful Fiendgods, a world where Dynasties lasted for millions of years. A world which is both greater...and yet also smaller...than he ever could imagine. He would have the opportunity to join them, and in this life, Ning swore to himself, he would never let himself be weak again! The Era he was born into was a Desolate one, but Ning would make it his era.

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

Chapter 1: The Mortal World

Within the Three Realms.

Clatter, clatter, clatter.

The sound of many hooves clattering against the ground could be heard as what looked like a river of black steel flooded through the streets. Atop the large, armor-clad horses were the black-armored knights, all of which had frozen looks in their eyes. They looked as though they had come back from Hell itself as they galloped towards the majestic, towering castle at the end of the path.

The guards at the top of the castle walls were rather drowsy, as things here had been peaceful for far, far too long. Given the influence and power of Tianxun Castle, how many would dare to cause trouble here?

“Eh?”

The vibrations caused by the distant, galloping horses caused one of the guards to take a closer look off towards the distance. Torches were lit all around the castle, and their light was dimly reflected off the armor of the distant knights.

“Not good.” The guard was shocked. Taking a closer look, he was able to tell that there had to be at least a few hundred knights headed their way. His face turned ashen with fear as he hurriedly picked up his warning horn, then lifted it up high and blew it loudly.

WUUUUUUUU!

The deep, echoing sounds of the horn instantly filled the entire castle. The castle instantly turned into a hubbub of commotion as many armored warriors charged out from within it. Quite a few women and children were awakened as well.

Soon, the walls became filled with many armored warriors, all of whom had solemn looks on their faces. Many of them were filled with savage, murderous auras as well; clearly, these were valiant figures that had seen and spilled blood before.

“Someone blew the warning horn? It’s been a long, long time since our Tianxun Castle has used the warning horn.” A gray-robed, white-bearded old man ascended the castle walls as well, escorted by a group of people.

There were three levels of alerts that could be used to notify Tianxun Castle of danger. Blowing the warning horn represented the highest level of danger!

“Someone would dare to cause trouble for our Tianxun Castle? Hmph.” Next to him was a muscular, scar-faced man. The scar-faced man sneered, “I want to see for myself who could be so audacious.”

“Come, fifth brother. Let’s take a look.”

A group of men escorted a white-bearded old man to the walls, all of them staring far off into the distance. And as they did...their faces all began to change. The mounted knights were now much closer than before, and the lead knights were actually beginning to slow down as they were within three hundred meters of the walls. The appearances of the knights could be seen clearly.

“Mystice Knights?” The white-bearded old man narrowed his eyes. He murmured to himself softly, “Why have Mystice Knights come here?”

“Mystice Knights.”

“There are a total of thirty thousand Mystice Knights, and around three thousand of them have come before us. Only one of their commanders has the authority to lead so many Mystice Knights.”

“Father, what should we do?”

The group of men all looked at the white-bearded old man, who was the lord of this castle. The white-bearded old man frowned, then said in a low voice, “Our Tianxun Castle might be capable of defeating these Mystice Knights if we fought with all our might, but our casualties would be utterly devastating...and we would anger the one who created the Mystice Knights as well...”

“Father, then we...?”

“Our only choice is to come up with a way to have them voluntarily depart.”

Rumble...

The thundering hoofsteps of the three thousand Mystice Knights continued to ring out as they began to gather in front of Castle Tianxun. Soon, all of the knights came to a halt. The leader was a commander dressed in silver armor who had a gray mask on his face. Only his eyes could be seen, and he stared at the white-bearded old man atop the walls as he said calmly, “Li Tianxun, the day of your death has come.”

“Death?” The faces of those atop the walls of Castle Tianxun became quite unsightly. These words showed that clearly, this matter wouldn’t be so easily resolved.

“Commander, might I ask how I offended you?” The white-bearded old man chuckled as he spoke, his voice echoing forth throughout the world. He was a peak Xiantian expert, after all. “My sworn brother’s eldest disciple, ‘Immortal Omniscient’, is currently residing within my castle. I would suggest that you leave this place. If you disturb Immortal Omniscient, you would have committed a grave sin.”

“Immortal Omniscient? I’m supposed to believe he is here, just because you say he is?” The silver-armored knight said coldly.

The white-bearded old man immediately called out, “Immortal Omniscient!”

“Uncle, you can just address me as Omniscient. There’s no need to address me as ‘Immortal’.” A streak of light flew out from the city walls. It was an azure-robed man standing atop a flying sword. A cold wind blew past, rustling his robes. He stood there atop the sword, drifting downwards from the skies, causing all the guards atop Castle Tianxun to grow excited.

“Mystice Knights.” The azure-robed man looked downwards, then said calmly, “There’s no real disputes between my Transheaven Palace and the Mystice Knights. I think it would be best if you leave.”

“He really is here...” the silver-armored knight growled softly.

“We of Castle Tianxun do not know how we offended the Mystice Knights. Later, I will definitely send people to deliver gifts in recompense.” The white-bearded old man still had that yielding, accommodating smile on his face. Neither the Mystice Knights nor Transheaven Palace were powers he could afford to offend!

“The general’s guess was right on.” The silver-armored commander continued in a low voice, “Elders, sorry to trouble you.”

“Leave that kid Omniscient to us.”

Whoosh. Whoosh.

Two streaks of light flew out from within the ranks of the Mystice Knights. It was two of the armored knights, but their auras suddenly exploded with power that was greater than even Immortal Omniscient’s.

“Elders of the Mystice Knights?” The azure-robed man had been flying forward calmly atop his sword, but his face now instantly changed. It was known that the Mystice Knights had a total of ten commanders, each of which could control three thousand knights...but the truth was a bit more complicated than that. Strictly speaking, these thirty thousand knights were nothing more than the disciples under the general’s tutelage, with the better ones being promoted to become lieutenants, captains, and commanders. Commanders were generally all at the peak Xiantian level.

If however they were able to break through again and reach the Zifu level, they would no longer be required to serve as military commanders. They would become elders.

Every single Elder was, in truth, a former commander. The most terrifying figures of the Mystice Knights were its elders and its general.

“Transheaven Palace and the Mystice Knights...” Immortal Omniscient began frantically. All of the Zifu Disciples of the Mystice Knights had risen to power through countless battles. Each and every one of them was terrifying.

“Transheaven Palace...no longer exists.” Both of the elders spoke out as

they flew into the air.

“What?!” Immortal Omniscient’s face completely changed.

“Go join them in the tomb.” Accompanying these words was an attack, as one of the elders sent a streak of curved, bloody moonlight towards Immortal Omniscient. The battle instantly erupted.

“KILL!” The silver-armored knight immediately gave the order.

Castle Tianxun had already begun to panic. Two Immortals had suddenly emerged from within the ranks of the Mystice Knights, causing them to lose all of their courage. With a single boom, the gates to the city were blasted open. Given the power of the Mystice Knights, breaking through the gate of a castle was far too easy.

The slaughter instantly began.

The Mystice Knights had made their preparations long ago. The terrified guards of Castle Tianxun were far from being a match for them.

“Ahhhh!” A terrified, fleeing woman was chopped to death by one blow of a saber.

“Mother! Mother!”

“I’m gonna kill you!”

One by one, the children were wiped out as well.

Castle Tianxun was transformed into a river of blood.

The white-bearded old man had gone completely berserk, but he was unable to prevent it from happening. He roared angrily, “Even if the Mystice Knights have launched a war against Transheaven Palace, why do act you against Castle Tianxun as well? How has Castle Tianxun we offended you?!”

“Why? Tianxun, you old wretch, do you still remember me?” The silver-armored commander, who had fought with the greatest degree of savagery, removed his mask, revealing a hideous, scar-covered face.

“Who are you?” The white-bearded old man didn’t recognize him.

“It seems you’ve done so many evil deeds that you’ve forgotten. Do you remember that night, thirty-nine years ago, when you left behind one wound after another on the face of a child?” The silver-armored knight’s voice was filled with boundless hate.

“Y-you...didn’t you die?!” The white-bearded man was a peak Xiantian expert, after all; he naturally was able to quickly remember the events of that night, and he couldn’t help but stare in disbelief.

“Yes...it would’ve been best for you if I died. But I did not. Although I lost a great deal of blood, I didn’t die. I’m not the type to die as easily as that. I crawled out, alive, from that pile of corpses...and when I woke up, I found that I was the only survivor out of our tribe of thirty thousand. I survived...but my life was a life worse than death. That day, I swore an oath that I would one day destroy Castle Tianxun. I changed my name to ‘Bloodfeud’. Step by solitary step, I advanced through life...and now, I’ve become the general’s personal disciple.”

“Y-you...” The white-bearded old man’s heart shook as he stared at this man, whose face covered with savage scars.

Given the power of the Mystice Knights, they could’ve easily fixed this commander’s face long ago. However, he had chosen not to; clearly, it was due to him nursing this hatred.

“You actually managed to tie yourself to Transheaven Palace...but alas for you, after seeing the hatred festering in my heart for so long, one day Master finally asked me about it, and so I told him. Master’s response was... “Then we might as well wipe out Transheaven Palace. The death of the Lord of Transheaven Palace will be a good thing for the world.” The silver-armored knight continued to fight, drawing closer and closer to the white-bearded old man.

“It’s over.”

The white-bearded old man had never imagined that he was actually the reason why the general of the Mystice Knights had attacked Transheaven Palace. All of the knights of the Mystice Knights were madmen, and the general who had founded their order was the number

one madman in the world. No one dared to antagonize him. Even Transheaven Palace was doomed to be destroyed, now that they had.

Chapter 2: Understanding the Heart

In truth, the general of the Mystice Knights had taken a dislike towards Transheaven Palace for quite some time now. This was nothing more than a final, motivating spark. The general really did like his disciple, 'Bloodfeud'; he felt that Bloodfeud was his perfect successor. Bloodfeud was extremely talented, but had been held back by his hatred. Once he gained his vengeance, Bloodfeud would probably undergo a true transformation, rising like a phoenix from a pile of ashes. Thus, he decided to wipe out Transheaven Palace at one blow.

"Flee! Flee!"

"So long as I survive, the Li clan will remain." Upon seeing what was happening, the white-bearded old man no longer had any more will to fight, and he immediately began to flee.

The silver-armored knight, in turn, slaughtered through all who attempted to oppose him, doing his very best to close the range. Morale began to plummet as the guardians of Castle Tianxun saw their lord begin to flee, and they began to flee as well.

The Mystice Knights began an absolute massacre of the survivors. Bloodfeud's order was for them to kill everyone here, leaving none behind.

"Li Tianxun, stop fighting." An ancient voice rang out.

Two streaks of light flew towards him from far away. It was the two elders...and behind them, the corpse of Immortal Omniscient fell towards the ground.

"No..."

The white-bearded old man stared in despair at the two armored elders who had appeared in the air in front of him.

"Bloodfeud, he's yours," one of the elders said.

"Thank you, Elder." The silver-armored knight walked forward, filled with a murderous aura.

But right at this moment...

The world suddenly turned silent.

All the cries, the shouts, the screams, the begs for mercy, the sobs...they all vanished. It was completely silent now.

The Mystice Knight stabbing a spear through the air...the mother crouched in front of her child, blocking sabers and swords for him...the silver-armored knight whose eyes were filled with hatred...the two calm elders in the air...all of them had looks of utter shock in their eyes.

They realized...that they were completely unable to move.

Not even the two elders in midair could move.

“Alas.” A single sigh echoed within the world.

A black-robed youth suddenly appeared in the distance. He had been watching from far away, but with a single step he arrived in the air above Castle Tianxun.

Everyone present was utterly terrified, including the silver-armored knight and the two elders. Not even their general, who was said to be one of the top three experts of the entire world, was even close to being as terrifying as this black-robed youth. The black-robed youth stood there, and it seemed as though he had become the center of this entire world. The world itself seemed to shudder at his presence, as though he could effortlessly destroy it.

“You are the leader of these knights?” The black-robed Ji Ning stood in front of the white-bearded old man and the silver-armored knight, aiming his question at the knight.

The knight suddenly realized that he could now speak. He nodded.
“Yes.”

“You are the leader of this castle?” Ning looked at the white-bearded old man.

The white-bearded old man also realized that he could now speak. He immediately said, “Senior, the Mystice Knights destroyed my clan and

murdered countless innocents. Please give me justice, senior!”

Ning looked towards the silver-armored knight.

“Him? He wants ‘justice’? The entirety of Castle Tianxun is a den of devils. All of them deserve to die.” The silver-armored knight’s eyes were filled with hatred.

Ning did a quick scan of their souls, quickly sorting through the memories of the silver-armored knight and the white-bearded old man. He now completely understood the situation, as well as how much hatred this silver-armored knight held in his heart.

“Our Castle Tianxun has brought blessings to many. Although we are many in number, resulting in the occasional evildoer appearing, you can ask anyone you like about our reputation, senior.” The white-bearded old man knew that this youth before him was his only hope for survival, and tears began to flow out of his eyes. “Damn these Mystice Knights. They didn’t even spare the children.”

“There’s no need to discuss your ‘reputation’.” Ning glanced at the white-bearded old man, his gaze very calm. “Lord of Castle Tianxun... leader of Blackwind Cave.”

The white-bearded old man’s face turned ashen.

It was true. Blackwind Cave was indeed a secret identity of Castle Tianxun. Every single male child would be trained, and in fact from the age of three they would be taught to kill. However, as the saying goes, a rabbit doesn’t eat the grass around his hole. It was true that in the surrounding area, Castle Tianxun’s reputation was sterling, and they had indeed done many good deeds. But in other places...they were the utterly vile and rapacious Blackwind Cave! They had robbed and murdered countless people, which was why Castle Tianxun was so wealthy.

But very few knew this secret!

The only reason Bloodfeud knew the secret was because he was one of their victims. After he became a Mystice Knight, he learned the full truth.

“All of them deserve to die. All of them!” The silver-armored knight said

demonically.

“But the children? The women who have never killed a single soul? Those infants who are still dressed in swaddling clothes?” Ning looked at him.

“Pull up grass by the roots.” The silver-armored knight looked at Ning. “I know you are strong, senior. I’ve already taken my revenge. If you wish to kill me or punish me, that’s entirely up to you. I only ask that the others not be implicated as a result. My brothers in the Mystice Knights only attacked because of my orders. I’ve been gripped by hatred for countless years. Now that I’ve taken revenge...I’m satisfied.” The silver-armored knight stood there resolutely.

Ning shook his head.

Whoosh. Ning waved his hand, and all of the children and women within Castle Tianxun were drawn into a minor world estate-treasure which Ning kept with him.

And then, Ning himself vanished as well.

“Eh?” Everyone sensed that they were now able to move again.

“He didn’t kill me?” The silver-armored knight was momentarily stunned, but he then fell to his knees and kowtowed solemnly thrice.

As for the white-bearded old man, he was completely and truly stunned.

The two elders had solemn looks on their faces. They hurriedly urged the silver-armored knight, “Bloodfeud, hurry up and deal with Li Tianxun. We need to leave this place right away and report today’s events to the general.”

“Right.” The silver-armored knight nodded, then immediately strode forward. The white-bearded old man closed his eyes.

Ssssshnk. The spear stabbed forward, piercing through the white-bearded old man’s chest, then retracted. As it did, blood spurted out. The white-bearded old man opened his eyes as his body fell powerlessly to the ground...and then he began to laugh wildly. Moments later...all signs of

life fled his body.

A short while later, the three thousand Mystice Knights immediately departed from this place under cover of night.

“The amount of hatred and evil within the Three Realms is becoming greater and greater.”

As Ning wandered this world, he could sense that this entire world was filled with hatred and vileness.

His two clones had already spent more than 160 years in Undermoon Lake. He had no way of finding out or sensing what had happened within Undermoon Lake, but he was still certain that they were alive. If one died, the other clones would immediately sense it and be able to recreate it.

“Ji Ning, your priority is rescuing your wife. There’s no need for you to take part in the Realmwars for now.”

“Master, my wife is my wife, while the war is the war. These are two separate things.”

“Don’t worry. When the final war for karmic luck begins, we’ll have you take part. As for now? You won’t have much of an impact on the overall situation, so you should focus on your training. Fuxi, Suiren, and the others all view you with great favor. If you can become a True God or Daofather before the Endwar, you’ll be of true assistance.”

“Alright.”

These were the words which Subhuti had said to Ning. Ever since then, Ning had roamed the Three Realms. He had seen many things in his travels. The Realmwars came one after the other, and the Seamless Gate grew increasingly berserk in his actions. Due to their increasing degree of influence, even the mortals were greatly impacted as all sorts of murders, feuds, and unjust acts grew increasingly common.

Ning had seen too many things. He understood that in truth, all of this was due to the provocations of the Seamless Gate, which sought to transform the previous days of peace into utter chaos.

The Seamless Gate delighted in chaos. But in a time of chaos, the lives of ordinary mortals were like grass to be trampled upon!

In addition, Ning had always felt that children were innocent. When he had been young, he had tortured to death a member of the Riverside clan for the sake of avenging Spring Grass, but he had spared the man's child, 'Riverside Cai'. Want revenge? Grow powerful and come after me! But in the end, that child Cai had only been able to become a Zifu Disciple...and then, Cai had died in the chaos the Seamless Gate had created.

He saw mortals in all their states. He saw through their small kindnesses and their petty feuds, their grudges and their gratefulness.

Ning couldn't explain how it made him feel, but he could sense that his heart was slowly transforming.

Night.

The black-robed Ning was seated in the lotus position atop a stone that was located at the very peak of an ordinary mountain. In front of him hovered a Goldstar Bead of the Heavens, divine runes flickering atop its surface. Ning spent most of his time analyzing the [Five Treasures] and the Nine Chaos Seals. By comparing and contrasting the two, he was able to gain insights faster. In order to study the Nine Chaos Seals, he had to view the goldstar beads.

"Eh?" Suddenly, Ning sensed something.

"Come out."

Instantly, a dazzling horde of stars seemed to appear in the air as all 3600 goldstar beads emerged. As Ning sent out his Immortal energy, they began to glow brightly, the divine runes on their surface changing nonstop. Slowly, arcane auras began to manifest above each of the goldstar beads, causing them to emit auras of incredible profundity.

Chapter 3: The Mirrors of the Heavens

Every single goldstar bead's aura was now far more powerful than before. It was as though they had evolved somehow...and the reason was because Ji Ning had just mastered the second of the Nine Chaos Seals.

“How truly extraordinary. It supports and reinforces the [Five Treasures] sword-art, and is even more profound.” After mastering the second chaos seal, Ning could immediately sense how extraordinary these nine seals truly were. “If I had those two clones each bring a goldstar bead into Undermoon Lake and meditate on it, it most likely would've been beneficial to them in their quest.”

It was extremely difficult to completely memorize all nine of the Nine Chaos Seals. Daoist Three Purities had spent an enormous amount of effort before succeeding, and had only been able to master seven of the seals. Prior to becoming a World God, Mother Nuwa had only been able to master eight of the seals. There was simply no way that Ning could possibly memorize these incredibly profound and arcane chaos seals; he had to keep the goldstar beads by his side in order to train in them. The reason why he hadn't taken them into Undermoon Lake was because he was afraid that if he died in Undermoon Lake, the beads would be lost as well.

Even if just a single one of the 3600 beads was lost, the set would become incomplete and there would be no way for them to join together into the Thirty-Six Heavens in the future.

“Form.” The black-robed Ning willed it, and the 3600 dazzling goldstar beads in the skies joined together, rapidly merging into 360 stars, then further merging together into the Thirty-Six Heavens.

The Thirty-Six Heavens hovered around Ning, and Ning could vaguely sense that were somehow connecting to the workings of fate. Ning had a sudden thought, and he immediately barked out, “Change!”

Whoosh. The thirty-six dazzling, glowing globes suddenly transformed into a series of ancient, unadorned mirrors. These mirrors all had bronze

borders to them. Some of the mirrors had stellar diagrams of the sun and the moon on the bronze, while others had diagrams of fish, bugs, birds, and other beasts on them. Others were covered with flowers, trees, and other vegetation...

Every single mirror seemed quite extraordinary.

“Eh?” Ning stared carefully at these thirty-six levitating bronze mirrors with curiosity.

The Thirty-Six Heavens could transform into anything. The reason why they had changed into mirrors just now was because Ning had mastered the second chaos seal. Upon doing so, Ning felt a vague, hidden connection between them and the hidden workings of fate, and so he allowed them to go with the flow and transform as they pleased...and they became mirrors. Their current appearance was the most suitable appearance for unleashing the power of the Thirty-Six Heavens when using the second chaos seal.

Ning’s Immortal energy quickly filled into them.

“So that’s how it works. They are actually able to scry the workings of fate itself,” Ning murmured to himself. “They can view the past, the present...and the future?”

There weren’t many treasures in the Three Realms that were capable of touching upon the workings of fate, but there were a few. The number one such treasure was the Book of Life and Death!

The Book of Life and Death was one of the most mysterious, arcane treasures that existed. It recorded the details of the past and present lives of countless living creatures. It was capable of recording hundreds or even thousands of lives for each person. The Book of Life and Death was so powerful that just by scribbling a few extra markings onto it, a person who was destined to live just thirty years could instead be given a lifespan of three hundred years! It could be used to effortlessly change the workings of fate. It truly was an utterly heaven-defying treasure.

The Celestial Court, Buddhist Sangha, Daoist Path, and the Three Sovereigns all had treasures of their own that could also scry on the

workings of fate. They had also developed various fate-scrying methods and techniques as well.

Another example was the 'Stone of Three Lives' that lay by the side of the River of Forgetfulness. The Stone of Three Lives was similarly capable of illuminating the past, present, and future lives of a person.

"My Thirty-Six Heavens are quite similar to the Stone of Three Lives." Ning nodded slowly. "If that's the case...then since it has the appearance of mirrors, let them be known as the Mirrors of the Heavens."

There were only so many fate-scrying treasures in the Three Realms, and each of them had been created by major powers. This was the first time that an Empyrean God/True Immortal like Ji Ning had acquired a treasure like this. But of course, Ning hadn't created it on his own; he didn't have that ability! He had relied on the power of the Nine Chaos Seals, unconsciously applying them through the goldstar beads and transforming them into the Mirrors of the Heavens.

"They are capable of scanning one's past, present, and future. In addition, these thirty-six mirrors are shaped like rectangles; they are perfect for defense. In fact, it should even be possible to use them to reflect an enemy's attacks." Ning carefully examined his treasures, quickly coming to this conclusion regarding their uniqueness.

In the past, the goldstar beads had mainly been useful because of their extremely high quality, which was why Ning would use them in the form of various weapons. But now, thanks to the chaos seals, they had gained certain special powers as well.

After mastering the second chaos seal, Ning continued to wander the Three Realms as he had before. He watched many mortals, seeing their joys, their sorrows, their farewells, their reunions, their love, their hate, their debts, their grudges.

Love...love was the hardest one to truly fathom.

No expert, no matter how powerful, would be able to claim that he had truly transcended beyond this word, 'love'. Ning couldn't, despite having mastered the fourth stage of heartforce. Not even Houyi, who had

mastered the fifth stage of heartforce, could make that claim.

One year passed after the other. Ning continued to wander the vast world...

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Rumble...

A towering palace began to collapse as a flood of hatred, malevolence, and death energy soared into the heavens.

Two armies of Immortal cultivators were battling each other, as were many mortals.

“Is this what things have come to on the eve of apocalypse?” The midair Ning stared downwards at the slaughter proceeding. He shook his head. He couldn’t, wouldn’t get involved. This sight was incredibly common these days in the Three Realms.

“Who can compare to the Seamless Gate when it comes to manipulating the hearts of men?”

“Why must they cause the entire Three Realms to be thrown into such a state of turmoil?” Ning felt quite powerless. Not even the major powers could stop this, to say nothing of him.

Even if he stopped this particular battle, as soon as he left the war would continue. During his journey across the Three Realms, Ning had long ago discovered that all of these disputes were caused by the secret machinations of the Seamless Gate. Aside from the more mundane methods of incitement they used, the Seamless Gate had a particularly powerful tool at their disposal...the Heavenly Dao of Heart!

The Seamless Chaosworld had originally had six Heavenly Daos; the Heavenly Daos of Earth, Fire, Water, Wind, Heart, and Primordial Chaos.

The Pangu Chaosworld had ten Heavenly Daos; the Heavenly Daos of Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, Earth, Yin, Yang, Destruction, Life, and Primordial Chaos.

But then, the Primordial Era had come to an end. Under the guidance of

Mother Nuwa, the Three Realms was founded using the Pangu Chaosworld and its Daos as the foundation. The Heaven Realm, for example, had originally been one of the largest surviving pieces of the Pangu chaosworld. The Pangu Chaosworld had served as the core, while the Seamless Chaosworld had been used as a support structure. Thus, the Heavenly Daos remained those of the Pangu Chaosworld!

As a result there was no way to, for example, truly understand and master the Heavenly Dao of Wind. The Three Realms had a flawed Heavenly Dao of Wind that had been divided up into many different Grand Daos.

The Heavenly Dao of Heart similarly no longer existed in the Three Realms.

However, of the major powers of the Seamless Chaosworld who had been alive during the old days, such as the Godking, quite a few had very high levels of attainment in the Heavenly Dao of Heart. They were tremendously skilled in manipulating the hearts of men. With but a single gaze, they could cause some ordinary Immortal cultivators to immediately fall to their knees and willingly become slaves.

The Seamless Gate had many who had gained insight into the Heavenly Dao of Heart early on, including many who were Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. They used their many clones to cause trouble throughout the Three Realms, and there was nothing the Nuwa Alliance could do about it.

Time continued to flow on.

Ten years. A hundred years. Three hundred years...

The situation in the Three Realms had become increasingly dire. The chaos in the mortal worlds was just a minor matter; the real problems lay in the repeated Realmwars between the Seamless Gate and the Nuwa Alliance! In the beginning, Realmwars only occurred every so often, but now they became increasingly frequent and increasingly deadly as both sides grew more and more berserk.

More and more Empyrean Gods and True Immortals began to perish!

Six hundred years had passed since the two clones had entered Undermoon Lake.

“Darknorth.”

“Darknorth.”

A shout could be heard echoing from far away.

Ning was seated atop a wooden boat, allowing it to be carried forward by the waters of the river.

Upon hearing the shout, Ning raised his to look. A long-haired man dressed in loose robes was walking through the air towards him from far away. He had been far away just a moment ago, but in the next instant he appeared before Ning’s wooden boat.

“Fellow Daoist Luoshui.” Ning pulled out a flask of wine.

“Why didn’t you let me know that you came to my place?” The long-haired man laughed as he sat down. This was True Immortal Luoshui, the controller of this world, the Luoshui major world. He was the disciple of Exalted Celestial Carefree, a True Immortal who had found his Dao during the Primordial Era.

“Quite a few old friends have died. I really wasn’t in the mood to pay a call.” Ning shook his head.

Upon hearing this, True Immortal Luoshui couldn’t help but shake his head and sigh as well. “True. Especially during the past three centuries. More and more Empyrean Gods and True Immortals have died. Quite a few old drinking buddies of mine have died.”

Ning nodded.

Based on what he knew, during the past six centuries since his two clones had entered Undermoon Lake, the Nuwa Alliance had lost more than 1300 Empyrean Gods and True Immortals! As for the Seamless Gate, they had lost more than 1000 as well! The number of Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals who had died...that number was truly incalculable. Although the casualties in each Realmwar weren’t that great, there had

been many, many Realmwars by now!

“Damn the Seamless Gate.” True Immortal Luoshui ground his teeth. “They are simply too despicable.”

“Indeed.” Ning’s face sank as well.

The Seamless Gate’s actions were simply contemptible! They actually acted in merciless fashion against the family members and loved ones of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Three Realms! For example, if they discovered that a True Immortal had a child, the Seamless Gate would send people to assassinate that child! An Empyrean God had just two disciples? The Seamless Gate would assassinate them!

“The Seamless Gate seeks to drive our Empyrean Gods and True Immortals mad. Ideally, they would go completely insane and die in their madness.” True Immortal Luoshui said furiously, “Even if they don’t go insane, they can be driven so berserk that they will seek out vengeance in such a way that leads to their deaths.”

Ning nodded.

For ordinary True Immortals and Empyrean Gods, to act alone in seeking vengeance upon the Seamless Gate was akin to committing suicide. Not everyone had as many powerful tools as Ning did! Only by staying calm and relying on the support of an army of other Empyrean Gods and True Immortals a Realmwar would they have a chance to win. The angrier they became, the easier it would be for them to die.

For the sake of achieving victory, the Seamless Gate would stoop to anything.

Fortunately, Ning had placed his daughter Brightmoon within the Crescent major world. Otherwise, she probably would’ve suffered an attack as well. These large-scale assassination programs the Seamless Gate had initiated had driven the Nuwa Alliance utterly furious. This was one of the reasons why the Realmwars were occurring nonstop now!

“All those years ago, when the Lord of All Fiends brought back the Seamless Gate survivors, we should’ve refused to let them in.” True

Immortal Luoshui ground his teeth. “Better to have fought then than to have allowed them back into the Three Realms. Now, they rooted themselves firmly here, growing increasingly powerful...and they have used that power to deliver us a vicious bite.”

“But who could’ve imagined all this?” Ning shook his head.

“True. No one was ready for any of this. We actually addressed many of the Seamless Gate as ‘brother’, and some were lifelong friends of mine. We even traded many of our techniques for theirs, resulting in them learning quite a few of our powerful techniques.” True Immortal Luoshui shook his head. “We didn’t try to prevent them from recruiting apprentices from our ranks either, resulting in them gaining large numbers of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.”

“It’s far too late to be saying these things now. All we can do is prepare for the war. Let all of this be decided on the field of battle,” Ning said.

“Right. The wars are becoming increasingly larger in size and scope. In a hundred years, or perhaps a thousand years at most, the final war for karmic luck will most likely begin,” True Immortal Luoshui said.

Ning nodded.

The final war for karmic luck...

That would be one of the last great battles before the end. All the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would enter this final battle that would truly decide the war for karmic luck. In fact, if the losing side felt that things were going worse than expected, they might immediately launch the Endwar, resulting in all the major powers attacking! All the surviving major powers would then engage the final, true Endwar.

Indeed, from the looks of things, this final battle would happen anywhere from a hundred to a thousand years from now.

“Right. Yesterday, True Immortal Dongyan of your Grand Xia died in battle.” True Immortal Luoshui looked at Ning. “Did you hear this news?”

“True Immortal Dongyan?” Ning was stunned.

Chapter 4: Yellow Emperor Realm

Ninelotus belonged to the Dongyan clan. During the Crimsonbright Realmwar, True Immortal Dongyan had battled alongside Ji Ning for many years. Ning and True Immortal Dongyan naturally became quite close friends, and in his heart, Ning felt tremendous admiration and respect for True Immortal Dongyan, due to the way Dongyan acted and treated others. Dongyan was a truly honorable, just, and upright man, a true hero. However, Ning could tell that True Immortal Dongyan always seemed to have a hidden sorrow buried within his heart. Most likely, something that happened long ago which True Immortal Dongyan had never been able to fully recover from.

“True Immortal Dongyan of your Grand Xia was quite an admirable person,” True Immortal Luoshui said with a sigh. “The Crimsonbright Realmwar ended long ago, which meant that the Seamless Gate had far fewer clashes against the Crimsonbright Realm. However, battles would still occasionally break out, and True Immortal Dongyan fought at the very front of almost every single battle. He was extraordinarily powerful, resulting in him killing two Empyrean Gods/True Immortals of the Seamless Gate. However, this time he was unlucky...he was surrounded by three Empyrean Gods/True Immortals of the Seamless Gate, and he wasn’t able to escape...”

Ning nodded slowly.

It had been six hundred years. Early on, when Ning had heard of the deaths of his friends, he felt pain in his heart. Later on, however, as more and more of them died, Ning was able to stay calm despite his grief. This was because he knew that this was a war that no one would be able to avoid or escape from...and in war, there would always be casualties.

To prevent people from dying, there was only one solution – Win the war!

“Ji Ning.” A voice suddenly rang out in Ning’s mind.

“Master.” Ning was startled.

“Come to Mount Innerheart right away.”

A spatial whirlpool suddenly appeared directly in front of the wooden boat. True Immortal Luoshui, still on the boat, was a bit puzzled upon seeing this. Ning immediately explained, “Master has summoned me. I need to leave immediately. Please pardon the abruptness, fellow Daoist Luoshui.”

“Hurry up and go, go! Don’t mind me,” True Immortal Dongshui said hurriedly. Ning was now powerful enough that his status as a disciple of Subhuti had long ago become widespread. The reason why Subhuti had forbidden Ning from telling others in the past was because he was concerned that when other experts knew of Ning’s true status, they would all do their best to curry favor with Ning and befriend him for the sake of giving Subhuti face. That would make it so that it would be very difficult for Ning to be truly tempered and tested while wandering the Three Realms.

This was Subhuti’s standard plan for training disciples. In the beginning, Subhuti would not permit them to say that he was their master, unless he gave explicit permission. Only when they became powerful experts of the Three Realms would they be allowed to make it public.

Whoosh. Ning immediately flew into the spatial whirlpool. He didn’t spend too much time traversing through it before arriving at the air above Mount Innerheart.

Ning immediately landed before the Daoist monastery.

“Uncle-master.” The two guards at the entrance, Clearwater and Whiteriver, both smiled as they welcomed Ning.

Ning nodded, then stepped into the Daoist monastery.

After entering, Ning was quite surprised to see that far off into the distance, not only was the white-haired Subhuti seated in the lotus position, more than ten of his disciples were seated below him as well. All of them were at the Empyrean God/True Immortal level. His third apprentice-brother, Goldcrow, had made a rare appearance. Silvermoon

and Lord Jiang, who he was quite familiar with, were here as well. Other members included senior apprentice-sister Empyrean Phoenix and senior apprentice-brother Junwu, who he had met just a few times.

Ning hurriedly walked over, choosing a place to sit down.

“Ji Ning, have Redsnow come out,” Subhuti instructed.

“Yes, Master.” Ning nodded, immediately notifying Empyrean God Redsnow, who was in the Starseizer world, to come out. A short while later, Redsnow appeared as well.

“Everyone is here now.” Subhuti looked downwards at his disciples, then said calmly, “You should all know that ever since the assassinations the Seamless Gate carried out three centuries ago, battles have continuously raged between us and the Seamless Gate.”

Everyone present nodded.

Everyone, Ning included, was enraged at the mention. Even mortals knew the principle of not getting family members involved, but the Seamless Gate had shown no scruples at all; they had launched a massive, Three Realms-wide assassination program! The Seamless Gate knew very well that this sort of assassination program could only be carried out once; after the first time, the Nuwa Alliance would be on their guard and give them no further chances. Thus, they made the program an enormous one. Although the Nuwa Alliance had many experts, they had been caught off-guard and so many had suffered catastrophic losses.

The family members, friends, and beloved disciples of many experts of the Nuwa Alliance had died miserable deaths.

In fact, twelve Pure Yang True Immortals of the Nuwa Alliance had been so enraged by what had happened that they had gone completely insane, resulting in them losing control of their power and thus losing their lives as well.

Every single member of the Nuwa Alliance had been enraged by this. The Three Emperors of Mankind and the two leaders of Daoism and Buddhism knew that there was no way they could suppress the rage of

their followers...and so war had erupted on a massive scale. The number of wars that had occurred during these three centuries was more than ten times as many as the wars that had occurred in the previous three centuries! Almost all of the Realms had experienced Realmwars by now.

“The vast majority of the Realms in the Three Realms have experienced Realmwars now. Only a very small number of truly top-tier Realms have been able to just barely keep the peace,” Subhuti said. “And now, the place where the next Realmwar shall erupt...is the Yellow Emperor Realm!”

“Yellow Emperor Realm?”

“The Yellow Emperor of the Five Emperors?”

All of them were shocked.

The Realms of most True Gods and Daofathers were fairly ordinary in strength, with a realm that possessed a hundred Empyrean Gods/True Immortals to be a fairly powerful one. Ning and the others all understood that the scale of the wars was increasing in size, and they weren't surprised that this Realmwar would be occurring within a Realm belonging to someone on the level of the Five Emperors. They had expected a war like this to occur for quite some time now.

But...they didn't expect that it would be the Realm of the Yellow Emperor!

The Yellow Emperor was someone who held an extremely exalted status in human history. The human race was first unified by the Three Emperors: Suiren, Fuxi, and Shennong. The next to rise to power was the first of the Five Emperors, Xuan Yuan the Yellow Emperor! In fact, long ago Shennong, then known as the Flame Emperor, had battled against the Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan for an extremely long period of time. Although Shennong was very powerful, he primarily focused his efforts on alchemy rather than leading his armies. Thus...in the end, he was actually defeated! It was the Yellow Emperor who won!

Even in the Primordial Era, the human race would thus refer to themselves as the ‘scions of the flame and the yellow.’ 1

It can be said that in terms of his influence on the human race, the Yellow Emperor was supreme amongst the Five Emperors. Although in the end, it was Yu the Great who established and solidified the imperial clan of humanity which had persisted to this very day, in terms of personal charisma and military prowess, Yu the Great was actually inferior to the Yellow Emperor.

“Yu the Great is the leader of the Primordial Imperial Clan. When the Primordial Imperial Clan gives the order, all the clans of the human race shall join together under their banner. They will definitely be saved for the final war for karmic luck.” Empyrean Phoenix was puzzled. “But of the four remaining monarchs, Emperor Yao, Emperor Shun, Zhuangxi, and the Yellow Emperor...Xuan Yuan the Yellow Emperor is definitely the most powerful of the four. More than a thousand Empyrean Gods and True Immortals are by his side at all times. His Realm is considerably more powerful than the Realms of Emperor Zhuangxi, Emperor Yao, and Emperor Shun. Why has war broken out in his Realm instead? 2

Ning and the others all knew that the likes of Emperor Zhuangxi only had six hundred or so Empyrean Gods and True Immortals under their command. Emperors Yao and Shun had perhaps a bit more, but they didn't have more than a thousand. Xuan Yuan, however, had roughly 1500 of them under his command.

It must be understood that the Five Emperors 'merely' had the power of top-tier True Gods/Daofathers. If one truly wished to become as powerful as possible, one would generally choose to become a follower of the Three Sovereigns instead! Suiren's Kindler world, for example, had more than ten thousand Empyrean Gods and True Immortals within it. There were many secret whispers that Suiren was actually the most powerful individual in the Three Realms, and so he naturally had many followers.

The Primordial Imperial Clan was the master of the entire human race. Many Daofathers were at its command, to say nothing of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.

For Xuan Yuan, who had long ago given up his title as leader of the human race, to still command more than 1500 Empyrean Gods and True

Immortals was actually quite incredible.

Subhuti gazed downwards. He said calmly, "Since we are going to fight, then let us have a good one. This Realmwar is going to be different from the previous ones. In all the previous Realmwars combined, we lost around a thousand Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. But this time... Xuan Yuan has more than 1500 under his command. Factoring in all the reinforcements he will receive, he will have more than 2000 under his command. 'Ordinary' casualties would be in the hundreds, but if the fighting becomes especially fierce, it's entirely possible that more than a thousand will be killed. In other words...this Realmwar will see as many casualties as all the other Realmwars thus far combined!"

Everyone below him could feel the silent pressure.

Their side would have more than two thousand Empyrean Gods and True Immortals? The enemies would most likely have a similar number of experts.

A battle like this...even most Daofathers would run the risk of being surrounded and annihilated.

"Which of you would like to join?" Subhuti looked at Ning and the others. "If you wish to join, you will of course be allowed to command a formation comprised of other Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.

Each and every one of Subhuti's disciples was extraordinary. Even the latecomers like Ji Ning and Redsnow were quite impressive.

"Me." A voice rang out.

Ning and the others all turned to look.

The speaker was Empyrean God Silvermoon. Silvermoon no longer looked as relaxed and carefree as he had in the past. His body was covered with a baleful aura that had come from centuries of battle and slaughter. Long ago, Silvermoon had expressed a willingness to accompany Ning in battle, but for the sake of rescuing his wife, Ning had temporarily put aside his plans to enter the war. Silvermoon was unwilling to wait, and so he had gone out by himself to take part in quite

a few wars.

*

1. This comes from actual Chinese quasi-mythological history. The Flame Emperor 'Yandi' (who many believe to be Shennong or a descendant of Shennong) was defeated by the Yellow Emperor 'Huangdi', who merged their two tribes together into the 'Yanhuang' (flame-yellow) tribe that is viewed as the tribe that eventually became the Chinese people.
2. Yao and Shun are two famous Chinese Emperors who were legendary for their benevolence. The 'Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors' are part of actual Chinese quasi-history.

Chapter 5: Daomother Devilhand

Of the disciples under Subhuti's tutelage, Silvermoon's battles against the Seamless Gate were the most savage of them all.

At first, Ji Ning didn't understand why. Later, he learned that Silvermoon had once had a Dao-companion. However, during the war that destroyed the Primordial Era, his Dao-companion had died...and it was as though Silvermoon had lost his soul.

Later on, the Lord of All Fiends had brought back the survivors of the Seamless Gate to the Three Realms, and the Nuwa Alliance had been unable to do anything to him. Thus, the two sides had made peace, resulting in the Seamless Gate being allowed back into the Three Realms.

But Silvermoon had attacked. He started a wild massacre of the Seamless Gate's forces. He was even willing to kill Celestial Immortals! As for Empyrean Gods and True Immortals? Nearly twenty of them died by Silvermoon's hands! He had fought in such a berserk fashion that he had accidentally killed many weak cultivators as well. He had fought like a man possessed, causing the True Gods and the Daofathers of the Seamless Gate to be both shocked and enraged.

Back then, the Seamless Gate wanted to live a peaceful life in the Three Realms. Because Silvermoon was the disciple of Subhuti, they didn't kill him; instead, they negotiated this matter with the major powers of the Nuwa Alliance. In the end, Silvermoon's master had forcibly ordered him back to Mount Innerheart, where he was given the low-key position of overseeing the Divinities Palace.

He had slaughtered and murdered so many that he, too, suffered the effects of karmic sinflames. Back at Mount Innerheart, he talked and laughed as though nothing had ever happened, and his life within the Divinities Palace was a relaxed, leisurely one. No one knew, however, that the hatred and fury in his heart had never subsided. When the storm had descended, he had been willing to follow Ji Ning and kill alongside him, as he could see that Ji Ning was as berserk as he was. However, who

would've thought that Ji Ning would suddenly stop fighting? He had thus ventured out on his own to fight alone. He didn't blame Ji Ning at all. He knew very well that if it was his Dao-companion, he probably would've made the same choice as Ji Ning had.

"Alright." Subhuti nodded. "Who else?"

"Me."

"I'll go."

"It's been a long time since I've fought in a war."

The many disciples actually all began to call out. Of the many disciples present, the only two not to speak out were actually Ji Ning and Redsnow. Ning hesitated a moment, then said, "Master, let me go. This Realmwar is different from the others."

"There's no need for you to go." Subhuti shook his head. "A Realmwar on this level...your participation won't have much of an effect."

Ning was stunned.

His master's words were correct. A grand formation created by just 200-300 Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would be comparable to a true Daofather in power! His own Rahu God was actually probably a bit weaker than those formations. In this war, each side was mobilizing 2000-3000 Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, who would be using some truly powerful formations. Even ordinary Daofathers would die if they intervened. Whether Ning participated or not really wouldn't make much of a difference.

In a war like this, massed power was what really made the difference.

"Redsnow? How about you?" Subhuti looked towards Redsnow. Redsnow had been the follower of Daoist Threelives, and was legendary for his warmaking abilities.

"I won't go." Redsnow shook his head. "Your disciple has gained some insights lately and is at a critical moment."

"Oh?" Subhuti's eyes lit up. He didn't believe Redsnow was lying about

this.

Ning wasn't surprised. Ever since he had given a bottle of chaos nectar to Redsnow, allowing Redsnow to train to the second stage of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods], Redsnow had entered secluded meditation for some reason! The only reason Ning had reached out to him was due to Subhuti's summons; otherwise, he wouldn't have bothered Redsnow.

"If that's the case, focus on your training. It would be wonderful if you can break through to become a Daofather before the Endwar," Subhuti said with a smile. He knew that Ning had given a bottle of chaos nectar to Redsnow, as Ning had actually discussed this with him before doing so.

To Subhuti, a single bottle of chaos nectar wasn't enough. Any True God or Daofather would need at least a hundred such bottles in order to train to the second level of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]. A single bottle? It would only be of use when given to Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.

Two days later, Subhuti led his disciples to the Deerchaser major world of the Yellow Emperor Realm. The Deerchaser major world was the world where the Yellow Emperor, Xuan Yuan, lived.

Within the imperial palace of the Deerchaser world.

Subhuti and Xuan Yuan were both seated, with Ji Ning and the rest of the disciples all standing to one side. Ning carefully inspected this legendary figure, this Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan who had once defeated even Shennong in their battle for dominance over the world. In terms of appearance, Xuan Yuan was an immaculately handsome man. His gaze seemed to bring an aura of the spring wind with it, causing others to unconsciously feel well-disposed towards them.

It must be understood that when they fought long ago, Xuan Yuan was merely a top-tier Daofather. Although it was true that Shennong's mind wasn't really focused on leading his armies, he was still someone on the same level of power as the leaders of the Daoism and Buddhism. For Xuan Yuan to be able to achieve victory was testament to his military prowess.

In all the Three Realms, Xuan Yuan was most likely the number one military mastermind.

“Aside from Ji Ning, all of these disciples will take part in the battle,” Subhuti said with a smile.

“Ah?!” Xuan Yuan was overjoyed. He immediately said, “That’s wonderful! I was worrying about this just before you came. The more powerful a formation, the more requirements are placed upon the centers of the formation. Before Mother Nuwa departed, she left us with three mighty formations meant to protect our entire race. Logically speaking, we should have Daofathers assume central command, but since neither side has deployed Daofathers yet, we are forced to use Empyrean Gods and True Immortals...and the more powerful, the better! I was worrying about not having enough powerful Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. Subhuti, you came just in the nick of time. This is like delivering warm coals to a freezing man in the midst of winter!”

“This war will be different from the previous ones. The previous Realmwars were all small-scale battles; this one is going to be far greater,” Subhuti said seriously. “After this Realmwar ends, the other large-scale Realmwars shall begin as well. The Realmwar for your Yellow Emperor Realm will be the very first of the large-scale battles; we have to make sure that the outcome is a beautiful one. Let’s deal the Seamless Gate a heavy blow!”

“Right.” Xuan Yuan nodded. “If we can seize the advantage, we’ll be able to keep the advantage. This war will indeed be very important.”

As the saying went, a thousand-kilometer canal could be collapsed by a single errant anthole!

This battle would be a critical one. If they were to lose, the upcoming battles would become more difficult as well.

Time flowed on.

Aside from Subhuti’s forces, the other major powers of the Three Realms sent reinforcements of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals as well. In fact, quite a few came by themselves! Within the span of a single short month, the number of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals who had gathered here within the Deerchaser world numbered more than 2800.

All of them were focused on learning the foundational parts of these mighty formations.

Nine Empyrean Gods/True Immortals including Goldcrow and Empyrean Phoenix, who were ranked amongst the most powerful of experts and were also indisputably loyal, were permitted to learn the core techniques to these ancient, powerful formations.

Rumble...

Suddely, one day, the entire Deerchaser world trembled. Ning hurriedly emerged from his residence, raising his head to stare towards the outside, his eyes blazing with torch-light. He was able to clearly see the sky split apart tens of millions of kilometers away, as a castle that was radiating limitless amounts of bloody light came flying out from within that giant crack in the skies. The aura that emanated from the castle quickly swept through the entire Deerchaser world.

The castle was ten thousand kilometers long. It slowly descended, then came to a halt in midair. Above the castle was a glowing streak of bloody light that rose high into the heavens.

“Daomother Devilhand.” Subhuti, Xuan Yuan, and Suiren stood shoulder to shoulder, staring towards the distance. Subhuti frowned as he made this statement.

“Devilhand actually came? And she came in person, in her true form.” Suiren frowned as well. He had merely sent one of his clones here, while Subhuti and Xuan Yuan were both here in person.

The Lord of All Fiends was the most mysterious figure within the Seamless Gate, and he had incredible escaping techniques. Not even Mother Nuwa had been able to do anything to him when he had chosen to flee.

The Lord of the Everwood was someone that the Nuwa Alliance did not wish to make an enemy out of. He was skilled in countless techniques and spells.

Daomother Devilhand was the most berserk member of the Seamless

Gate, and her power was absolutely astonishing. She was so berserk that during the war that ended the Primordial Era, she had actually dared to duel Mother Nuwa one-on-one for a long period of time. In fact, she had even dared to go battle the two leaders of Buddhism and Daoism all by herself! In the end, she had been heavily wounded by Daoist Three Purities' 'Immortal Slaying Sword Formation'.

She was an absolute madwoman. When gripped by bloodlust, she wouldn't even care about her own life. However, no one dared to deny that she was powerful. Even during the war that ended the Primordial Era, the only ones who could be described as unquestionably more powerful than her were Mother Nuwa and the Lord of the Demonheart. No others!

"It seems the Seamless Gate really wishes to win this battle," Subhuti said. "They actually sent Daomother Devilhand to guard their forces."

"We want to win, but so do they," Xuan Yuan said. "In the end...victory will be determined on the field of battle."

"Have all our preparations been made?" Suiren asked.

"Yes." Xuan Yuan nodded.

Everyone in the Deerchaser world was jittery right now.

Two mighty castles, one surrounded by bloody light, the other surrounded by golden light. Both hung there in midair, facing each other from several hundred thousand kilometers away.

Both armies were gathering within their respective castles, prepared to launch the war at any moment.

"This war...it'll be the largest war that we will fight before the final battle for karmic luck." Silvermoon stood alongside Ning atop the city walls, staring at the distant Seamless City as it glowed with bloody light. "The total number of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals on our side for this war number nearly three thousand. The Realmwars that come after this one in the Realms of the various top-tier Daofathers will generally involve just a few hundred, maybe a thousand at most."

"There are many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. As for Celestial

Immortals and Loose Immortals, it feels as though there is an infinite number of them,” Ning said with a soft sigh.

In his heart, he felt a bit of regret.

Regret that he wouldn't be able to take part.

Keep waiting. Bide your time.

Even if he took part in this battle...given how vast it was, he really wouldn't make much of a difference. He really wondered...

How much longer were those two clones of his going to remain within Undermoon Lake?

Chapter 6: The War Begins

The two castles hung in the air, facing each other from afar.

As for the army of the Seamless Alliance, it had been dispatched already. They covered the wilderness, calling out the Nuwa Alliance for battle.

The first time they called out for battle, the Nuwa Alliance completely ignored them, not responding at all. The second time the Seamless Gate did this...the Nuwa Alliance still ignored them.

It must be understood that when calling out the enemy for battle, the insults would be absolutely atrocious to hear. The worse the insult, the better! This was true amongst mortals, and it was similarly true amongst these Immortals and Fiendgods, who were quite boorish and foul-mouthed in their catcalls.

The third time. Still nothing.

“Master, the Seamless Gate is calling us out again,” a white-robed youth said respectfully.

Xuan Yuan sat in front of a desk, leisurely flipping through a book in his hands. Hearing his disciple’s report, he laughed softly. “Daomother Devilhand lives up to her reputation. Had the Seamless Gate sent over any other Daofather, that person probably wouldn’t be so quick to bare the fangs in such a manner.”

Know thy enemy and know thyself; only then would you be the victor in all your battles.

Due to the long years of peace that had previously existed between the Seamless Gate and the Nuwa Alliance, the Nuwa Alliance had learned much of the history of Daomother Devilhand when she lived within the Seamless Chaosworld. Although she was a madwoman, she was extremely adept at leading soldiers in battle. All of her disciples were females, and all of them were just as crazy as she was.

She led her madwomen in a conquest across the chaosworld, sweeping

through it like a storm. In the end, it had been the Lord of the Demonheart himself who had to be the one to stop her.

In terms of frontal attacks, not even Lord Demonheart was a match for Daomother Devilhand. But of course, in terms of manipulating the mind and understanding the demons that lay in every heart, who could possibly match up to Lord Demonheart? Conquering the world wasn't merely a matter of warfare! And so, in the end it had been Lord Demonheart who had unified the Seamless Chaosworld.

"Mm." Xuan Yuan put down his scroll, then said with a smile, "Give the order. Assemble for battle!"

"Uh huh..." For a second, the yellow-robed youth was as calm as ever... but suddenly, he stared wide-eyed towards Xuan Yuan.

"Why are you still here?" Xuan Yuan turned to look at him.

"R-right. Your disciple shall go immediately." The yellow-robed youth hurriedly flew out, beginning to summon the various parties.

Xuan Yuan walked outside of the room. Standing by the rails, he stared at his vast citadel. As the order was given, a sea of soldiers came flooding out from throughout the citadel, quickly assembling together. Xuan Yuan nodded lightly. "This is the fourth time they are calling for battle. It's about time. This war is critical; if we win it, we'll be halfway to winning the war for karmic luck."

"We have to win." An awe-inspiring light flashed through Xuan Yuan's eyes.

Atop the city walls.

Subhuti, Xuan Yuan, and Suiren were standing shoulder-to-shoulder, staring at the two armies facing off against each other on the desolate wilderness.

Ning, the yellow-robed youth, and a number of other disciples were following behind them. None of them dared to so much as breathe too loudly. They all knew exactly how important this war was going to be.

Boom!

Whoosh!

Thud!

Both of the two distant armies had begun to assemble into mighty formations.

The Seamless Gate had the Seamless Infinity Formation, the 'Life and Death Formation of the Twin Realms Calamity Dragons' 1, and the Infinity Fiendgod Formation. These were their three primary formations, and each of these terrifying formations needed two to three hundred Empyrean Gods/True Immortals in order to be formed. There were also some golems which Ning couldn't even name, each of which was on an even higher level of power than the Daofather golem Ning had previously encountered. The golems glistened with violet light, emanating a heart-shaking aura of terror.

There were a total of three formations of Calamity Dragons. Above these three formations swam a countless number of black dragons, each of which was as powerful as an ordinary Empyrean God. The important thing was...there was an absolutely incredible number of them!

There were a total of two Seamless Infinity Formations.

There were also two Infinity Fiendgod Formations. They had come together to form a pair of towering, white-haired, red-eyed Fiendgod.

The Nuwa Alliance also had three primary formations. They were the Sidereal Star Formation, the Myriad Immortals Armageddon Formation, and the Pangu Genesis Formation. There were three of Sidereal Star Formations, five of the Myriad Immortals Armageddon Formation, but only one Pangu Genesis Formation!

Aside from them, there were also more than a hundred Seven Planets Gods who were scattered everywhere, moving with great agility.

As for golems? The Nuwa Alliance didn't have a single golem on their side. Clearly, a battle at this level meant that only golems of a certain power level could be used. The Nuwa Alliance obviously didn't have any

golems of such power.

“In terms of formations, the Seamless Gate is far inferior to us,” Subhuti said calmly from his position atop the walls. “The Seamless Infinity Formation was created by Lord Demonheart. As for the Life and Death Formation of the Twin Realms Calamity Dragons, the Seamless Gate stole it from us. Back then, we didn’t expect that a day like this would come, and so we were willing to teach them formations of this level. As for the Infinity Fiendgod Formation...it should’ve been devised by Everwood. It’s actually the most powerful of the three...but alas, it’s still vastly inferior to our Pangu Genesis Formation.”

“After Mother Nuwa broke through to the Pangu level, she spent a tremendous amount of research and effort in order to devise the Pangu Genesis Formation. Before she left the Three Realms, she imparted it to us as a formation for protecting our entire race,” Xuan Yuan said with a laugh. “How could their formations possibly match up to it?”

“Fortunately, Mother Nuwa had misgivings early on. She warned us sternly long ago that these three guardian formations were absolutely not to be taught to others. This is why we now have the power to keep them suppressed in formation power.” Subhuti let out a sigh.

Suiren nodded slowly. “Fortunately, we have those three protective formations.”

Ning and the others secretly nodded upon hearing this. They had heard the stories as well.

If it could be said that the Nuwa Alliance was deeply envious of the Seamless Gate’s mastery over the art of golems, then the Seamless Gate was similarly envious of the three mighty guardian formations of the Nuwa Alliance. All three of these formations had been left behind by Mother Nuwa after she had broken through to become a World God. She had spent tremendous blood, sweat, and effort on these formations, precisely because she was afraid that once she left, other powerful alien Outsiders like the Lord of All Things would appear. She was afraid that the Three Realms would not be strong enough to withstand another such

Outsider, and so she created and imparted these three formations.

These three formations would generally have a True God or Daofather at the center, with many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals acting as support. Their power was utterly shocking!

But of course, a simplified version could be used which allowed for an Empyrean God/True Immortal to server as the center. The power of the formation would drop dramatically, of course, but despite that it still wasn't something the Seamless Gate could compete against.

"The Pangu Genesis Formation." Ning stared off into the distance.

The Pangu Genesis Formation had, at its center, the disciple of Daofather Fujū - True Immortal Jimin, the 'Sword Immortal of the Outer Heavens'. 580 Empyrean Gods were supporting him, joining together into this utterly astonishing formation! This formation was so powerful that it was as strong as a top-tier Daofather! Most importantly of all, True Immortal Jimin was the person controlling this formation. True Immortal Jimin was the only Empyrean God or True Immortal in the Three Realms who had mastered the [Five Treasures]. His sword-art surpassed the limits of the Heavenly Daos, allowing him to unleash truly astonishing levels of power from this Pangu Genesis Formation.

"I still remember my arrival into the Netherworld Kingdom after I died in my previous life. Back then, I encountered this Life and Death Formation of the Twin Realms Calamity Dragons." Ning couldn't help but sigh. The terrifying, world-shattering formation that had destroyed even the Sixth Paths of Reincarnation had once more appeared before him. Back then, in the Netherworld Kingdom, Ning had been nothing more than a puny human ghost.

Even the slightest aftershock ripple from an attack by a Calamity Dragon would have completely destroyed his soul.

"It's begun."

Everyone on the walls were nervous.

Subhuti, Sui ren, and Xuan Yuan stared intently at the battle below,

especially Xuan Yuan. Xuan Yuan's coresense filled every part of the battlefield, and he was constantly rearranging the military deployments, arranging for the various Seven Planets Gods to better harmonize with the major formations.

The Nuwa Alliance had nine mighty formations, each of which had nine central figures.

Three of Subhuti's disciples were in command of three mighty formations; they were Empyrean Phoenix, Goldcrow, and Junwu.

Senior apprentice-brother Goldcrow was in command of a Sidereal Star Formation. 2

Senior apprentice-sister Empyrean Phoenix and senior apprentice-brother Junwu were each in charge of a Myriad Immortals Armageddon Formation.

"Go."

Each of the towering, massive Myriad Immortals Armageddon Formation were composed of a hundred True Immortals, a hundred thousand Celestial Immortals, and more than a hundred million Loose Immortals. Together, they were capable of summoning an utterly enormous amount of natural energy.

An enormous figure of a giant appeared in the air above the formation. It was senior apprentice-brother Junwu, his white robes fluttering gracefully. He raised up his painting brush, casually swiping towards the heavens with it. Instantly, countless weapons appeared in the skies that shot towards the distant forces of the Seamless Gate. With another stroke of the brush, he manifested countless divine soldiers and divine generals and sent them to attack as well.

"Senior apprentice-brother Junwu." Ning felt eager when watching this. Junwu was the young child who loved to paint which Subhuti had accepted as his disciple long ago. Upon meeting, Subhuti had given him a single line of guidance...and overnight the child had completely mastered a Dao-Path, the Dao of Inkwater. It could be said that he was the most talented disciple Subhuti had ever accepted.

Battling against Junwu was an extremely headache-inducing decision, because his techniques were simply too complex. His flicks of the brush were capable of virtually drawing anything in the world...but precisely due to the complexity of his Dao, Junwu had yet to break through to become a Daofather.

[Previous Chapter](#)[Next Chapter](#)

This was the formation that appeared during the destruction of the Six Paths of Reincarnation, all the way back in Book 1, Chapter 2! ↩

Raws said he was in command of a Seamless Infinity formation, but this is clearly an author error.

Chapter 7: The Envoy of All Things

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The heavens trembled. The ground shook.

A Pangu God, clad in a fur loincloth, had just engaged in battle with an armored Infinity Fiendgod.

The Nuwa Alliance's 'Myriad Immortals Armageddon Formation' was exchanging long-distance attacks with the Seamless Gate's 'Life and Death Formation of the Twin Realms Calamity Dragons', disrupting the entire battlefield with their attacks.

Long-distance attacks, protective stances, rapid response reinforcements...the Seven Planets Gods and the golems were quite nimble, and they served to cause chaos throughout the battlefield.

The desolate wilderness was utterly annihilated, so much so that the empty Void could be occasionally seen in multiple places as space was torn apart, then reformed.

"Once Empyrean Gods and True Immortals are massed in numbers, they truly do become quite terrifying." Ning was nervous as he watched the war. "If either side reveals a single weakness, it's entirely possible that there will be a large-scale collapse."

"The marshals on both sides are quite powerful as well. Under Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan's guidance, the major formations and the hundred-plus Seven Planets Gods seem to work together like a perfect whole, leaving behind no flaws or openings to exploit. Daomother Devilhand's attacks, however, are absolutely fiendish. In fact, she nearly destroyed a Seven Planets God just now."

Indeed. Despite having battled for quite some time, the Nuwa Alliance had yet to lose even a single Seven Planets God! This was testament to how flawless and how formidable Xuan Yuan was in commanding his troops.

"Withdraw." Xuan Yuan gave the order.

Rumble...

Under Xuan Yuan's guidance, the great army of the Nuwa Alliance began to retreat in an orderly fashion, not giving their enemies even a single chance to attack.

And so, the first exchange of blows had come to an end.

Even a madwoman like Daomother Devilhand was extremely calm and collected when commanding a battle of this level. This was because even the slightest of mistakes could result in the entire war being lost. In truth, wars like this weren't won, they were lost when one side made too many errors! Although Daomother Devilhand was legendary for her ferocious attacks, she actually made very few mistakes when commanding troops. It was simply that she believed in the adage that 'the best defense is a good offense'.

Her assaults had caused the Seamless Gate to put Xuan Yuan under tremendous pressure. However...Xuan Yuan was clearly even more talented and skilled than her, and his force deployments were even better. He moved his troops about like the floating clouds and the flowing water, showing no flaws at all.

In the blink of an eye, three engagements had occurred and more than a month had passed.

"Aunt-master, if this continues, it won't be good for us. With each clash, we have lost more than our foes. It won't be apparent in the short run, but if this sort of battle persist for two or three years, our weakness will become apparent." The black-robed Godking stood off to one side, looking at the slender, violet-robed woman seated before him. In his heart, he felt rather nervous.

The violet-robed woman's eyes seemed to be like two endless seas of blood. In terms of slaughter, she was the undisputed number one of the Seamless Gate, a demon amongst demons.

"Mm?" The violet-robed woman looked at the black-robed Godking.

"I'm just concerned," the Godking said hastily.

“You are right.” The violet-robed woman lightly tapped on her armrest, a white crystalline bracelet around her arm. “I fought countless battles in the war for the Seamless Chaosworld, but I never met someone as formidable as him in leading armies. Battles on this level happen at incredible speed, and multiple variables are introduced every moment... and yet, he’s actually able to factor them all in while deploying his forces in an utterly perfect manner. No wonder this Xuan Yuan fellow was able to defeat Shennong during the Primordial Era.”

“Then what should we do?” The Godking said hurriedly. In the Seamless Gate, the only ones capable of making the Godking act in such an obedient manner were the Lord of All Fiends, the Keeper of the Everwood, and Daomother Devilhand.

“We have to win this war.” The violet-robed woman continued, “If we lose this war, the wars that come later will be much, much harder to win. We’ll need to spend even more effort, but we still might not be able to achieve victory in the final war for karmic luck.”

The Godking mumbled mentally to himself. No shit. Everyone knows this.

“Arrange for an Envoy of All Things to come,” the violet-robed woman ordered.

“An Envoy of All Things?” The black-robed Godking was shocked. He couldn’t help but ask, “We’re going to have an Envoy of All Things come? Now? B-but...we were preparing to use them in the final battle for karmic luck.”

“Make the arrangements. Otherwise, we won’t be able to win,” the violet-robed woman said calmly.

“Alright. However...we’ll need the Lord of All Fiends to concur in this matter,” the black-robed Godking said hurriedly.

“Hurry up and go.” The violet-robed woman frowned, a dangerous glint of anger appearing in her eyes. The black-robed Godking was instantly so terrified that his heart quailed. He had grown up in the Seamless Chaosworld, after all. Even though he was now a Daofather, he still felt

dread when facing Daomother Devilhand. She was a madwoman! Others would perhaps give him face as the nominal leader of the Seamless Gate and as the disciple of Lord Demonheart, but this madwoman would even dare to assault Lord Demonheart himself, to say nothing of the 'Godking'.

The Allfiend world.

At the top of a solitary mountain.

A red-robed, azure-haired man was seated here, staring into the boundless Void. His gaze had long ago pierced through the dimensional barriers separating worlds, allowing him to see through the space beyond them.

Whoosh. A figure suddenly materialized next to him. It was the black-robed Godking.

"Fiendlord," the Godking said respectfully.

"What is it?" The Lord of All Fiends glanced at him.

"Aunt-master believes that our chances of victory are low. If things continue, we may very well lose. She instructed me to come here to request an Envoy of All Things," the Godking said.

The Lord of All Fiends frowned. "If that's the case...go speak to Blackheaven. Take an Envoy back and give it to Devilhand."

"Yes." The Godking respectfully departed.

The Lord of All Fiends once more stared into the Void. He murmured softly, "I truly wish I could go back to the old days, when I could hide myself behind Demonheart and Everwood...but alas, I've been forced to stand forward. They even address me as the 'Lord of All Fiends', as Fiendlord. It was far better when I was simply 'Windfiend'; life as Windfiend was far more relaxed and carefree than life as the 'Fiendlord'. I really wonder what this war will end up like. Although Mother Nuwa has already departed, she left these three mighty formations behind. It's hard to say exactly how powerful those three protective formations are."

"If worse comes to worst, I'll try to save as many as I can, then leave the

Three Realms.” The Lord of All Fiends shook his head.

He had no taste for power.

During the era of the Seamless Chaosworld, he had been a very low-key figure. Back then, the most dazzling figures had been the Lord of the Demonheart, the Keeper of the Everwood, and Daomother Devilhand. No one had paid much attention to Windfiend, even though he was also born an Elder Fiend like the rest of them. In fact, there were many major powers in the Seamless Chaosworld who believed that Windfiend’s power came solely due to his good fortune in being born as an Elder Fiend, as it didn’t seem as though he had improved much at all since being born.

They only showed him respect because he was an Elder Fiend as well.

Windfiend didn’t really care. He enjoyed being carefree and unbound... but the war that ended the Primordial Era had simply been too devastating. So many of his old friends, his brothers, had ended up dying in battle. The Lord of All Things had been very vicious; he had wanted to wipe out everyone in both chaosworlds! As for Mother Nuwa, she was an even more terrifying figure; she had actually broken through to a brand new level, dominating all comers and slaying even the horrifying Lord of All Things.

Windfiend’s only choice was to reveal his full power...and faced with death, he had actually made a breakthrough of his own, making it so that not even Mother Nuwa was able to catch him as he fled.

After spending a long period of time wandering the primordial chaos in solitude, he had returned.

“In truth, all I wanted was a safe place to call home.” The Lord of All Fiends shook his head. The survivors of the Seamless Gate had insisted on venerating him as the ‘Fiendlord’, making him the true, undisputed leader of the Seamless Gate.

“What exactly is the cause of this tribulation? That old fellow, Demonheart, is plotting something...but it feels as though there’s more to it than that...” The Lord of All Fiends frowned.

Ever since he had made his breakthrough while fleeing from Mother Nuwa, his ability to sense the tides of fate had most likely become number one in all the Three Realms. He could vaguely sense how terrifying this tribulation truly was.

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Celestial Immortal Blackheaven stood in front of him, pointing towards a titanic, ape-shaped golem that was completely dark-red in color and wreathed in tongues of flame. "Take it away, I suppose."

The black-robed Godking swept the surrounding area with his gaze. Upon seeing all the other Envoys of All Things in the area, he couldn't help but feel his heart itch.

"Remember, let the most powerful Empyrean God you have command it," Blackheaven instructed. "Logically speaking, it should be reserved for a Daofather to command, but despite that, this Envoy of All Things should be able to unleash power comparable to that of a top-tier Daofather."

"Understood." The black-robed Godking nodded hurriedly.

All those years ago, the Lord of All Things had led an army of such Envoys, each of which had reached a level of power that was fully capable of launching attacks against the leaders of Daoism and Buddhism. They were utterly terrifying on the field of battle.

Even with Empyrean Gods in command of them, they were comparable to top-tier Daofathers.

"Also, make sure Devilhand knows that no matter what, we can't let the Nuwa Alliance capture this Envoy of All Things." Blackheaven laughed coldly, "My worry is that the Nuwa Alliance will act in an utterly shameless way, having experts like the Three Sovereigns or the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism to suddenly attack and capture the Envoy."

'Don't worry. Masters Devilhand and Everwood, as well as the Fiendlord, are paying close attention to this battle. The True Gods and Daofathers of the Nuwa Alliance won't be given any chance at all," the black-robed

Godking said.

“Right. Is Ji Ning taking part in the battle?” Blackheaven suddenly asked.

“No.” The Godking shook his head.

“A pity.” Blackheaven felt resentment.

He truly, truly wanted to kill Ning. Although almost all of his efforts were centered on these golems, he still felt hatred for Ning. It was rare for him to feel affection for someone...and that little girl had died, just like that. Although Ning had merely killed her in his counter-attack when they had attempted to assassinate him, Blackheaven really didn't give a damn about the particulars.

“Don't worry. If Ji Ning dares to enter the field of battle, I'll make sure to ask aunt-master Devilhand to give him some special attention,” the black-robed Godking laughed. “I'll take my leave, Grandmaster.”

“Go, go.” Blackheaven nodded.

The Godking waved his hand, collecting the Envoy of All Things, then left the Allfiend world, heading towards the Deerchaser world once more.

Chapter 8: Descent

Daomother Devilhand stood atop the castle walls, the black-robed Godking next to her.

They stood shoulder-to-shoulder, staring at the distant wilderness. The army of the Seamless Gate was there, calling out for battle.

“Are you sure that they haven’t found out that you brought an Envoy of All Things?” Daomother Devilhand asked.

“Don’t worry, aunt-master,” the black-robed Godking said hurriedly. “I personally went to collect the Envoy of All Things. How could I possibly allow the Nuwa Alliance to find out about it? In addition, the Envoy only requires a single Empyrean God/True Immortal in control. While I was in the Allfiend world, I also brought along Empyrean God Bloodwave. This, too, was kept a secret. Empyrean God Bloodwave is extremely skilled in close combat; he was our number one choice for controlling an Envoy during the final war for karmic luck. With him in control, the Envoy will be able to unleash more than enough power and be capable of rivaling top-tier Daofathers.”

“Although their Pangu Genesis Formation is quite powerful, it’s one of the three protective formations left behind by Nuwa! All three of them have tremendous power, but in order to unleash it they need a True God or Daofather to serve as the core of the formation. They have True Immortal Jimin, who mastered the [Five Treasures], serving as their core, which means that the size, scale, and power of the formation is much weaker now. It is just barely a match for top-tier Daofathers; there is still a significant gap in power between it and our Envoy of All Things.”

“The sudden appearance of the Envoy of All Things will immediately disrupt the balance of the battlefield. Don’t be fooled by how seamless Xuan Yuan appears to be in moving around his forces; once a collapse starts, it will be complete and total.” The black-robed Godking was quite confident.

“Mm.” Daomother Devilhand nodded. “I hope this Envoy of All Things

truly is as formidable as you say.”

The Envoys which the Lord of All Things had created were indeed quite powerful; they had proven their strength during the war that ended the Primordial Era. But the Envoys created by the Seamless Gate were developed by Grandmaster Blackheaven. Grandmaster Blackheaven was a peerless talent in the Dao of Golems who the Lord of All Fiends had found in some unknown place. He was actually also capable of creating these Envoys, and the power of his Envoys seemed to be equivalent to those which the Lord of All Things had made.

“They are coming out.” The black-robed Godking’s eyes lit up.

“They finally came out. Xuan Yuan...” A hint of a cold light flickered through Daomother Devilhand’s eyes. “This time, I’m going to make you crumble.”

Boom! Boom!

Both armies once more charged towards the other.

The Nuwa Alliance’s army had a slight edge to begin with. With Xuan Yuan’s truly superb military skills, the Nuwa Alliance’s advantage was even more apparent. Although Daomother Devilhand was also skilled in commanding her troops, occasional setbacks still occurred for her forces.

It was just like all their previous clashes. Each time, the Seamless Gate’s forces would be whittled away slightly.

“Hmph.” Atop the castle walls, Daomother Devilhand sent a mental order. “Release the Envoy of All Things.”

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On the field of battle, the Pangu God and the two Infinity Fiendgods battled with the most ferocity.

The Pangu God formed by the Pangu Genesis Formation held an utterly enormous sword in its hands, executing sword-arts that all exceeded the limits of the Heavenly Daos. It naturally possessed nigh limitless power. As for the two white-haired, red-eyed Infinity Fiendgods, they were quite

powerful as well. The Infinity Fiendgod Formation had been developed by Keeper Everwood, after all, and he had poured endless amounts of blood and sweat into it. Both Infinity Fiendgods were dressed in incomparably precious Protocosmic spirit-armors, which they relied on to defend against the Pangu God's terrifying sword-arts. Both Infinity Fiendgods supported each other at all times, and so although they were at a disadvantage, they were still able to hold on against their foe.

"Kill." The Jimin-Pangu was extremely calm. He was waiting...waiting for his foes to make a mistake!

No matter how well those two Infinity Fiendgods fought together, they were still commanded by two different people, not one. In a frenetic, high-powered battle, it was inevitable that they would eventually commit mistakes. Once they made a mistake, he would seize the opportunity to wipe out one of them. Once one was destroyed, the other would not be of any concern at all.

"What's that?!" The Jimin-Pangu was shocked to discover that behind the two Infinity Fiendgods, an ape-shaped figure had suddenly appeared out of thin air without any warning. This creature's entire body was wreathed in flames, and its aura was so powerful as to instantly stun the Jimin-Pangu. In fact, the subconscious sense of danger emanating from this creature was so strong that he couldn't help but mentally shiver.

"Jimin, be careful! That's an Envoy of All Things." Xuan Yuan's voice immediately rang out. "Ignore those two Infinity Fiendgods; I'll send people to help you block them. Focus on defending against the Envoy!"

"Alright!" The Jimin-Pangu instantly understood. He had heard of these Envoys long ago, but he had never seen one of them in person before.

.....

As soon as the Envoy appeared, Xuan Yuan's face instantly changed. However, he remained cool and collected as he quickly began to redeploy his forces, squeezing out every drop of power he could to relieve the pressure on the Jimin-Pangu, so as to let him fight against the Envoy without worrying about anything else. That way, the Jimin-Pangu would

have at least a sliver of a chance of defending against the Envoy of All Things.

However, if the white-haired, red-eyed Infinity Fiendgods were allowed to join forces with the Envoy, then the Jimin-Pangu would definitely suffer a swift defeat. And once he collapsed...the entire field of battle would collapse.

“Stop them.”

“The five of you, go block the Seamless Infinity Formation closest to you.”

“The two of you, retreat and stop that group of golems!”

Xuan Yuan was processing many things in parallel, sending simultaneous orders to all the major formations as well as the Seven Planets Gods.

The entire battlefield suddenly transformed in a chaotic, disastrous way.

Atop the city walls. Xuan Yuan was watching over the entire battlefield here, quickly redeploying his forces. Next to him were Subhuti and Suiren, and their faces had turned grave.

Ji Ning and the other disciples standing behind them were even more frantic than the three.

“Not good.” Ning instantly saw the situation turn grim for their side. “In order to allow the Jimin-Pangu to safely focus on dealing with the Envoy of All Things, he’s sending the Sidereal Star Formations and Myriad Immortals Armageddon Formations to keep the Infinity Fiendgods tied down. Although this will make things a bit easier for the Jimin-Pangu, that means everyone else will now be under much greater pressure.”

Their strongest asset on the battlefield was the Jimin-Pangu. Before the appearance of the Envoy, the strongest assets the enemy had were those two Infinity Fiendgods! Defending against the two of them put enormous pressure on the rest of the army.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The distant Jimin-Pangu was exchanging blows with the Envoy of All Things.

“AWUUUU!!!!” The fiery, ape-like Envoy of All Things raised its head, bellowing with utter madness as it lashed out with its long claws.

Clang!

The Jimin-Pangu landed a piercing blow on the Envoy with a streak of sword-light, but the only result was a clear, ringing sound. The blow didn't manage to penetrate through at all! The Envoy, however, became even more savage, its sharp claws filling the skies with endless attacks, with the lashing whip-strikes from its simian tail also possessing astonishing power. The Jimin-Pangu was at a complete disadvantage in this battle.

“They are beginning to retreat.” Ning, watching from far away, was immediately able to notice that their entire army was moving backwards, receding slowly as a whole, like the receding tides of the sea.

“What an incredible figure Xuan Yuan is.” Ning couldn't help but feel admiration for him. If an ordinary commander was in charge, once their side was unable to withstand the enemy attacks, they would begin to crumble and break apart; it would be extremely hard for the army to retreat intact. But despite the adverse battlefield situation, Xuan Yuan was able to silently, perfectly coordinate a wholesale withdrawal. Although the Seamless Gate realized this, there was nothing they could do; they were already fighting with all their strength.

Boom! Ning's face suddenly changed. He stared towards the distance, where a distant Seven Planets God just crumbled. A chain reaction began to occur, with the five Seven Planets Gods next to him being thrown into grave danger as well.

As the withdrawal continued, more and more Seven Planets Gods began to suffer damage.

Xuan Yuan was still quite calm as he continued with his arrangements. Clearly, in the eyes of Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan...the loss of twenty-seven Seven Planets Gods wasn't too heavy a price to pay. If any of their

nine major formations were destroyed, their losses would be devastated. As he saw it, to suffer some casualties during a retreat was unavoidable. All he could do was minimize their losses as much as he could.

“Kill! Kill! Kill!”

Some of the Seven Planets Gods were especially dazzling. One of them, a Seven Planets God who wielded a pair of scimitars, was particularly outstanding. It was the Seven Planets God commanded by Ning’s senior apprentice-brother, Empyrean God Silvermoon.

Silvermoon had exploded forth with truly astonishing combat power. The missions which Xuan Yuan had given him were all quite complicated, but he still carried them out to perfection. He was as effective as three Seven Planets Gods, all by himself.

The withdrawal continued, and their side continued to suffer losses.

Boom! Finally, a Myriad Immortals Armageddon Formation suffered a collapse from all the attacks it had sustained.

A hundred True Immortals, a hundred thousand Celestial Immortals, and more than a hundred million Loose Immortals instantly began to be massacred. Faced with the terrifying, horde-like army of the Seamless Gate, they weren’t able to fight back at all. Even their formation had been destroyed; how could they possibly withstand these attacks?

Xuan Yuan’s face slowly turned ashen.

“Not good.” Ning suddenly discovered that Silvermoon’s dazzling, berserk Seven Planets God was in a dangerous situation. His earlier performance had been simply too showstopping; clearly, he had drawn the attention of the Seamless Gate’s army, which viewed him as a tough-to-chew bone that they had to get rid of as soon as possible. Thus, the True Immortal controlling the nearby Life and Death Twin Realms Calamity Dragons Formation suddenly pointed towards him.

Rumble...

The black dragons in the sky began to streak downwards, flocking towards Silvermoon’s Seven Planets God.

Chapter 9: Confluence

“Hahahaha...come, come! The two of you, go! Leave this golem to me!” Silvermoon’s Seven Planets God roared like a frenzied devil, charging forward to block a violet-light golem on his own. This was the first time the Seamless Gate had deployed these golems in a battle, and they were fairly rare. Each of them was a bit more powerful than a Daofather golem.

There was no way a single Seven Planets God could withstand it...but Silvermoon’s Seven Planets God charged forward to fight it solo, as though he had gone mad.

Black dragons continued to descend from the heavens, assaulting Silvermoon as he fought against the Daofather golem. Even the golem was affected by collateral damage from their attacks; this was simply unavoidable.

Boom!

Silvermoon’s Seven Planets God finally collapsed.

The savage, violet-light golem was about to massacre the Immortals within, but right at this moment, a towering, handsome, white-robed man suddenly appeared before him. It was Empyrean God Silvermoon! Silvermoon transformed to become three hundred thousand meters tall, with each palm thirty thousand meters long. He stretched out his massive hands, simultaneously grabbing onto two of the closest violet-light golems next to him.

“Ahahaha....” The handsome, white-robed man roared with laughter, but held onto those two golems with a death-clutch.

Although both golems did their best to fight back, and although they were still able to move forward, their were clearly slowed down dramatically by Silvermoon’s deathgrip on them. There was no way they could possibly chase after other members of the Nuwa Alliance. There were only so many of them to begin with, and now two of them had been suddenly bogged down at the same time.

“Send two more. Trap him into a magic treasure and seal him away.” Daomother Devilhand, atop the walls of the Seamless Citadel, frowned as she sent the mental order.

“I’ve mastered the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], precisely because I want to keep fighting without pause on this field of battle!” The white-robed Silvermoon allowed the enemies to freely assault him. The Seven Planets God was merely a formation, but his body itself had reached the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]; it was nearly indestructible!

“Senior apprentice-brother Silvermoon.” Ning watched the seemingly berserk Silvermoon fight on the battlefield. Due to how recklessly and madly Silvermoon had fought each time on the battlefield, Subhuti had decided to give Silvermoon many Great Firmament Immortal pills, enough to ensure that he could master the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]. Subhuti had warned Silvermoon, “Mastery of this art will only give you a higher chance of survival. If you insist on acting in a suicidal manner, no one and nothing will save you.”

On the battlefield, Silvermoon could see two more of the golems charging towards him. His divine body suddenly split apart into thirty, each of which fled towards one of three directions.

“Silvermoon, you’ve done enough! Hurry up and flee back here!” Xuan Yuan immediately sent mentally.

All by himself, Silvermoon had tied down four of the enemy golems, allowing the pressure to ease up considerably on the other Seven Planets Gods.

A short while later, the grand army of the Nuwa Alliance completed its withdrawal, leaving behind only the army of the Seamless Gate, which continued to call out mockingly towards them.

“Damn that Empyrean God Silvermoon.” A baleful aura was in Daomother Devilhand’s eyes.

Silvermoon’s sudden actions had indeed impacted the situation across the entire battlefield. If it hadn’t been for him, with a bit of luck the

Seamless Gate might've been able to cause the entire army of the Nuwa Alliance to collapse. Even if there was no collapse, their losses definitely would've been much heavier.

"His divine body is quite powerful. He must've trained in the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]," the black-robed Godking said. "He was willing to risk it all in using his own body to tie down our forces. This did indeed have an impact on our pursuit. But...aunt-master, Silvermoon split up into multiple bodies and fled in many different directions, and we killed many of them. His life essence has definitely been badly damaged. It's entirely possible that it will be a thousand years before he can fully recover."

"Perhaps." Daomother Devilhand nodded, a cold smile on her lips. "It took multiple clashes for Xuan Yuan to kill a small portion of my forces. I managed to cause him painful losses in just one."

"In this battle, he must have lost nearly six hundred Empyrean Gods and True Immortals...and that's because they were lucky. Next time, they won't be so lucky." The black-robed Godking was filled with confident as well.

"You need to remain on your guard." Daomother Devilhand instructed, "And ask for your master to help out. We have to get a clear sense of what the Nuwa Alliance is planning."

"Yes." The Godking smiled and nodded.

.....

The Nuwa Alliance.

Within the levitating citadel.

The mood here was quite depressed. Those who were allowed to wander about freely within the castle were all Empyrean Gods or True Immortals. As for the Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals, they were all required to remain within their respective camps. That way, they would be able to assemble more quickly.

"Senior apprentice-brother Silvermoon, you were too rash. You nearly

died just now!” Ning looked at Silvermoon, whose aura was noticeably much weaker than before. Those destroyed clones had all contained part of Silvermoon’s soul. He had lost more than half his soul this time. Although his Dao-heart was powerful enough for him to remain clear-minded and have his soul dissipate, he was still at the very brink of it happening. After fleeing, he had to eat a spirit-pill Subhuti had given him before he was able to stabilize his soul. Right now, Silvermoon’s power was perhaps just barely on the level of an ordinary Celestial Immortal’s.

“If I didn’t try something crazy, even more Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would have died,” Silvermoon said softly. “To be honest... perhaps a death on the battlefield is the most suitable refuge for me. I was able to allow more of my friends to survive than would’ve otherwise. It was worth it.”

“Junior apprentice-brother Silvermoon. Junior apprentice-brother Darknorth.” A distant voice rang out.

Ning and Silvermoon both turned to look. It was their golden-haired, golden-robed senior apprentice-brother Goldcrow who was walking towards them.

“Senior apprentice-brother Goldcrow.” The two of them called out to him.

“Silvermoon, you truly rendered major merits to our cause this time. Just now, Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan said that if it wasn’t for you, the situation would’ve been even uglier for us,” Goldcrow said.

“Senior apprentice-brother Goldcrow, after you took control of a Sidereal Star Formation, you rescued the Jimin-Pangu and its hundreds of Empyrean Gods on multiple occasions. You are the one who has truly done great things,” Silvermoon said. This was the truth as well; because the Jimin-Pangu had to hold off the Envoy of All Things, it had to be the last to flee. Since Goldcrow had the ‘Golden Sunstreak’ divine ability, he had indeed assisted the army in escaping, ensuring that the Seamless Gate was unable to catch up.

“No need for us to talk about who did more. We were defeated this time,

and disastrously so.” Goldcrow shook his head.

“Yes. This was disastrous.” Silvermoon nodded. “Many of my good friends died in battle.”

“Yes.” Ning’s heart sunk as well.

Nearly six hundred Empyrean Gods and True Immortals had died!

Good heavens!

It must be understood that the Realms of the rest of the Five Emperors, such as Emperor Zhu anxu, each held just barely six hundred Empyrean Gods/True Immortals in total. For so many to die in a single battle...for every five that took part in the battle, one had died! How many friends, brothers, disciples had perished?

Subhuti’s disciples were all quite powerful, and they had all been quite lucky; all of them had actually survived. But most of them had just barely been able to escape, and even Silvermoon, who had mastered the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], had very nearly perished.

This time, they had survived.

Next time?

The entire citadel was filled with agony, resentment, and an unwillingness to accept this result. Their casualties had been horrendous, primarily because they had lost a Myriad Immortals Armageddon Formation as well as a Sidereal Star Formation.

Ning had wandered the Three Realms for six centuries. He had visited every single major world, and he had made many friends such as True Immortal Luoshui. And this time...of the nearly six hundred slain Empyrean Gods and True Immortals...there were 129 friends who had drank, chatted, and laughed by Ning’s side. Some had even sparred with him before!

Ning’s heart was filled with misery.

“Master.”

Ning had gone to visit Subhuti by himself.

“Eh?” Subhuti was seated in the lotus position. He looked at Ning.

“Let me join the battle,” Ning pleaded. “My Rahu God is comparable to those violet-light golems. If I send eighteen of my clones, that’ll represent a force capable of matching eighteen violet-light golems.”

Subhuti sighed and shook his head. “I understand how you feel right now...but right now, the main problem isn’t the golems. It is the Envoy of All Things! No matter how many low-level forces we have, if we can’t use them together in an effective manner, there’s no way we’ll be able to overcome the higher-level forces. The Envoy of All Things is simply too strong. Even the Pangu Genesis Formation was at an absolute disadvantage when facing it. It would be able to survive a short clash, but if they fought for a long period of time, the only result would be destruction.

“Tell me.” Subhuti looked at Ning. “Would Seven Planet Gods, even a hundred of them, be able to deal with a single Envoy of All Things?”

Ning shook his head.

A thousand Empyrean Gods and True Immortals trying to mob a Daofather would be massacred, unless they were capable of some sort of formation that allowed them to join their power together!

“The Envoy of All Things has the power of a top-tier Daofather,” Subhuti said. “Your Rahu God is much weaker than it, and its body is merely composed of divine power. It will crumble as soon as its defenses are breached.”

“Yes.” Ning nodded.

“We have methods for dealing with the other golems and formations. The real problem is this Envoy of All Things. If we can’t find a way to deal with it, there’s no way we can win this war.” An expression suddenly flickered across Subhuti’s face. “Leave me for now. Other major powers have arrived. I need to go meet with them as well.”

“Alright.” Ning respectfully withdrew, departing from Subhuti’s residence. Upon stepping out, he suddenly raised his head to stare off into

the distance. Far away, one major power after another was descending, each of them surrounded by auras of incredible power. All of these major powers descended directly into Xuan Yuan's palace.

"Now that an Envoy of All Things has appeared, things have become problematic for us. Not even the Pangu Genesis Formation can withstand it." A graceful, poised woman was next to Ning, also staring towards the skies with her head raised. It was senior apprentice-sister Empyrean Phoenix. "The Pangu Genesis Formation was left behind by Mother Nuwa. It is extremely powerful, but it really needs a Daofather commanding it in order to unleash its true power."

"Mm." Ning nodded.

"Who can stand against an Envoy of All Things?" Empyrean Phoenix shook her head. "The major powers have all come here to discuss this very question, no doubt. For so many major powers to be forced to convene...this is testament to how problematic this Envoy is."

Ning could sense the weight of the invisible pressure brought by the Envoy as well.

So many of his friends had died in battle...was it all for nothing? Were they going to lose?

Suddenly, Ning's body trembled.

Rumble...

A flood of memories began to surge into his mind from far away.

.....

At a blazing, fiery star within the primordial chaos.

Whoosh.

Spacetime twisted and a white-robed youth emerged from within.

"So the exit is actually located here. It's quite well-hidden. After six hundred years...finally, I'm out." The white-robed youth's body suddenly trembled.

A flood of memories surged towards him from the distant Deerchaser world of the Three Realms.

A confluence of memories!

His two clones had been completely separated from the rest after they had entered Undermoon Lake, and so there was no way for their memories to join together. Upon exiting Undermoon Lake...instantly, the memories of the two clones once more connected together with the memories of all the other clones, joining together into a confluence.

Part of the memories were formed from his six hundred years in Undermoon Lake and his time spent studying World God Northrest's many sword-arts, which allowed Ning to understand and master the number one sword-art of the Three Realms.

The other part of his memories were formed from his experiences of roaming the Three Realms, watching many events happen and gradually learning to understand the human heart. They also included his experiences and battles in Prisonworld 17.

The two different memories began to collide against each other, merging into one whole.

Different insights into the sword.

Different insights into the heart.

They continued to collide, merge, and fuse together...

Chapter 10: The Return

Although the core of the blazing star was incredibly hot, the flames on its surface were at most capable of harming Void-level Earth Immortals and Loose Immortals.

The white-robed youth stood there, not moving at all. Six hundred years worth of memories were fusing together nonstop.

It could be said that in Undermoon Lake, Ji Ning was completely and utterly infatuated with and devoted to the sword. All of his efforts had been spent on it, and his heart had barely changed at all. But in the outside world, Ning's heart had changed on a fundamental level. He had spent six hundred years dominating and soulscouring the prisoners of the prisonworld and had seen so many memories. Memories of darkness, of madness, of love, of betrayal...

Every time he soulscoured someone, the memories he saw would affect him slightly. If an ordinary person was to see someone else's memories, it was entirely possible that the memories would all bleed into each other and intermingle. Of course, this wouldn't happen for someone on Ning's level, but generally speaking it wasn't uncommon for shadows to be cast over one's mind. If one could endure it, however, it would serve as a form of tempering.

For someone like Ning, the backlash caused by soulscouring really wasn't worth mentioning. However, his heart had still slowly evolved, becoming as bottomless as an endless abyss, capable of holding anything within its depths.

As for the time he spent wandering the Three Realms and meditating on the Nine Chaos Seals, it had continuously tempered and refined Ning's heart even further.

One side had reached an astonishing level in the sword.

The other had seen a transformation of the heart.

Even mortals had the saying, 'put your heart into it'. Two experts might

be at the exact same level of sword-arts, but they would be able to produce completely different results based on the level of their heart.

“My sword was always a bit too excessively sharp; it wasn’t quite stable and steady enough. In Undermoon Lake, I was never quite able to make a breakthrough in this regard,” the white-robed youth mumbled. He suddenly pointed forward with his finger. At the tip of his finger suddenly appeared a swirling whirlpool that was formed from diametrically opposed types of power. Swish! The Void itself was pierced through.

“Now...I’ve finally made a bit of a breakthrough.” Ning nodded slowly.

During the past six hundred years in Undermoon Lake, Ning had almost completely focused on the sword. This became even more the case after he had viewed the ninety-eight stone steles which World God Northrest had left behind. They revealed a brand new path for Ning. Ning had wanted to reach the fifth level of swordforce very much, but going from the fourth level to the fifth level was as hard as ascending to the heavens. It was much like how only the great divinity Houyi had ever managed to reach the fifth level of heartforce; the number of fifth-level swordforce experts in the Three Realms could be counted on one hand.

To break through and reach the fifth stage of swordforce with just a few short centuries of training was simply far too difficult. Ning had always worked very hard, and although he hadn’t made a breakthrough in swordforce, he had learned much and actually been able to embark upon a different path. He had slowly gained insight into yinforce and yangforce, and had even been able to join them together into infiniforce. Ning was able to infuse many of his insights regarding World God Northrest’s sword-arts into his infiniforce technique.

World God Northrest’s sword-arts actually contained many different types of force, including swordforce, infiniforce, spacetime-force...

But clearly, when training with the sword, Ning had gained more insights into Yin and Yang, resulting in him comprehending the essence of infiniforce. In truth, during his early years at Swallow Mountain, Ning had simultaneously trained in two mighty sword techniques, one of fire,

the other of ice. When he trained in using ice and fire at the same time, he was unconsciously training in the basics of Yin and Yang as well. However, Ning had only spent so many years training, and most of those years had been focused on the Dao of the Sword and the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop. He was completely unwilling to divide his attention towards other Daos.

In Undermoon Lake, Ning didn't train in any other Daos at all, only training in the sword.

And so...in the end, had gained insight into infiniforce.

After three years, he had gained a basic level of insight into infiniforce. Strictly speaking, in the outside world it could be said that he had already gained insight into the Grand Dao of Infinity.

After twenty years, his infiniforce had reached the second level.

After less than a century, it had reached the third level.

And yet...he had yet to be able to reach the fourth level.

However, upon leaving Undermoon Lake and reconnecting with the memories from the outside world, his heart began to change. He drew upon the many insights regarding the sword he had gained during six centuries of roaming the Three Realms...and so, naturally and unconsciously, Ning reached the fourth level of infiniforce as well. But most importantly of all, because Ning's insights were derived from World God Northrest's sword-arts, his infiniforce and his swordforce began to join together into a perfect, flawless whole.

"The fifth stage of swordforce..." Ning could sense it much more clearly now than before.

"It seems the experiences of my predecessors were correct." Ning nodded mentally to himself.

World God Northrest had left behind many bamboo scrolls. Aside from containing techniques, some contained knowledge and guidance for training in general, as well as information regarding the endless primordial chaos. Alas, World God Northrest had fled in a blind panic,

and so even he wasn't certain how many different regions and dimensions of spacetime he had traversed before reaching the Three Realms. Thus, the few maps he had regarding the primordial chaos were all useless to Ning.

The knowledge and guidance for training in general, however, was very useful.

According to what World God Northrest had said, if one wished to reach the fifth stage of swordforce, one would ideally come up with ways of infusing other types of force into one's sword-arts, producing sword-arts of greater power. The more powerful one's sword-arts were, the closer one would be to the fifth stage of swordforce. To reach the sixth stage of swordforce would be to reach the stage known as the true 'World of the Sword'. This was the stage of World Gods, a stage that completely eclipsed the Heavenly Daos. The best way to reach this level was to train in sword-arts that surpassed the Heavenly Daos!

This was because the World God level, in and of itself, surpassed the Heavenly Daos. Thus, training in sword-arts that surpassed the Heavenly Daos, even in just one aspect such as the [Five Treasures] and speed, would still help tear a small 'crack' in the barrier the Heavenly Daos presented. This would allow Ning to move closer to that level.

"Following the guidance of my predecessors is akin to standing on their shoulders." Ning wouldn't be so arrogant as to disregard their guidance.

What he needed to do was constantly improve himself until he reached a point where he surpassed even his predecessors.

When he had been forced to personally consign Yu Wei into the Infinity Hells, Ning had suddenly comprehended many things. He had murmured to himself: 'Though I come from the mortal dust, my heart still soars towards the heavens.'

"Eh? I just mastered the Dao of Rainwater."

The white-robed youth stood there on the surface of the blazing star, stunned.

Because of his mastery over the [Five Treasures], he was finally able to comprehend other Daos again. Within just a few breaths of time, he completely mastered the Dao of Rainwater!

This was primarily because Ning was at simply far too high a level of understanding right now. When his ninth apprentice-brother, Junwu, was still just a mortal child, a single word of guidance from Subhuti had caused him to suddenly master an entire Dao overnight. What level of enlightenment had Ning reached? His sword-arts had surpassed the Heavenly Daos, and his swordforce and infiniforce had joined together perfectly. He had also absorbed the essence of the elite sword-arts left behind by World God Northrest, and his self-created [Brightmoon] sword-art was already definitely the number one sword-art of the Three Realms.

He possessed a incredibly high level of insight, and also possessed an incredibly high level of heartforce.

Comprehending the various Daos he already had an affinity towards? It was just a matter of time.

“Time to pay the prisonworld a visit.” The white-robed youth entered a boat-type treasure, shuttling through the Void.

Upon reaching the icy star and entering the prisonworld...

“Eh? I just mastered the Dao of the Thunderclap?” As soon as Ning entered the prisonworld, he was shocked by this revelation. He was surprised because prior to training in the [Five Treasures], he had no talent for lightning-affinity Daos at all. But now, he had suddenly mastered it with tremendous speed. It was second only to the Dao of Rainwater; he hadn’t even regained his other previous Daos, such as the Dao of the Inferno. Instead, it was the Dao of the Thunderclap which had come first.

Still, it made sense.

His divine body had long ago become baptized by lightning, becoming a lightning-attribute divine body. In terms of his body’s affinity for lightning, he was actually on an even higher level than Exalted Celestial Thundergod, who had been born out of the primordial chaos itself. His

body was able to completely become one with the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent, just as perfectly as a Golden Crow would be able to become one with the flames of the sun.

In truth, at this point in time, Ning's affinity for and talent in lightning actually surpassed even his talent for water! However, he had focused on the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop in the past. Even though his memories of it were lost, he would instinctively gain insights into it much faster than in other Daos, allowing him to quickly master the Dao of Rainwater.

And then...

The Dao of the Inferno and the Dao of the Gale all revealed themselves as well. He even began to gain insights into the Dao of Space once more.

"The more solid a foundation, the more one shall comprehend." Ning was quite calm.

According to what World God Northrest had said, different chaosworlds all had different Heavenly Daos! For example, the Pangu Chaosworld and the Seamless Chaosworld both had Heavenly Daos of Earth, but although they were extremely similar, there were still a number of differences. 1

For true experts, however, what really mattered was a solid foundation of fundamental forces such as swordforce, infiniforce, taiji-force, or chaosforce. Once one reached a sufficiently high level of insight into these fundamental forces, then no matter what chaosworld one entered, one would be able to rapidly gain insights into the many local Daos. By now...Ning had gained a very stable foundation.

"The prisonworld."

"In the past, my vision was far too limited. Or perhaps it would be more fair to say that the True Gods and True Immortals of Pangaea had limited vision." Ning was quite moved.

.....

A series of white-robed youths stood there atop a grassy area within the prisonworld. There were a total of eighteen of them, and they were scattered throughout the region. In front of them was placed a large

amount of Protocosmic spirit-treasures and unique treasures. The most powerful aura came from a sword...a Darknorth sword.

After six centuries of sweeping through the prisonworld, more than twenty True Gods and True Immortals had died by his hands! All the baleful aura released by those deaths had allowed one of Ning's six Darknorth swords to finally break through and evolve to become a Chaos treasure, thanks to the 'Armaments of Sin' technique.

"Thankfully, World God Northrest left behind certain techniques to me, allowing me to recognize how these treasures are meant to be used."

[Previous Chapter](#)[Next Chapter](#)

In the original Chinese, the character for 'Earth' used in Pangu and Seamless were different.

Chapter 11: Meeting the Godking

While roaming the vast primordial chaos, one had to be able to recognize treasures for what they were. If you saw one without recognizing one and passed it by, how laughable would that be? World God Northrest had naturally left behind many records, allowing Ji Ning to identify the treasures he was currently in most desperate need of.

“Come.” Ning willed it, and a dirty-looking cauldron flew towards him.

Ning had acquired this cauldron from an imprisoned Empyrean God. That Empyrean God had spent quite some time analyzing the cauldron after acquiring it, but wasn't sure exactly how it was to be used. In fact, not even the seniors of his sect that he asked knew the answer.

“A Five Elements Cauldron.” Ning nodded slowly. “I had thought that after leaving Undermoon Lake, I would need to spend time and effort scrounging up the materials I would need to forge one of these things. Now, I realize that I actually already have one...and this one is at the level of a Protocosmic spirit-treasure. Although it's nothing in the eyes of someone like World God Northrest, I probably wouldn't be able to make one as good.”

Five Elements Cauldrons were used to destroy magic treasures.

Right. Destroy them!

Precious items and minerals, along with magic items, damaged or undamaged, could be thrown into these cauldrons. They would be completely destroyed, and then reformed into five types of Five Elements essences; Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, Earth. Virtually every single treasure born from the primordial chaos could be melted down into essences of the Five Elements.

Even the primordial chaos itself could be converted into the Five Elements!

The extracted essences could be used to forge new magic treasures, as treasures that were infused with them would undergo certain

transformations.

The reason why Ning was in desperate need of such a cauldron was for the sake of that damaged sword, the most important treasure World God Northrest had left him.

“Violetjewel...although its core essence is intact, the sword itself is so heavily damaged that it is close to the brink of breaking apart. The sword is damaged so heavily that there is no way it can be used in battle at all. I have to use Five Elements essence in order to repair it!”

If given sufficient Five Elements essence, Violetjewel’s physical structure could be repaired enough to allow it to be once more used in battle. By then, it would definitely be far more powerful than a mere Chaos weapon.

Given even more Five Elements essence, Violetjewel could be completely repaired, allowing it to regain all of its former power.

To spend some Five Elements essence in exchange for acquiring a weapon that surpassed Chaos treasures? Of course Ning was willing!

All those years ago, World God Northrest’s efforts were completely focused on finding a way to halt the decay of his truesoul. He was focused on trying to stay alive, and so had no desire to waste time on creating a Five Elements Cauldron, much less collecting the many treasures that would be needed to refine a sufficient amount of Five Elements essences. As far as World God Northrest was concerned, repairing the treasure would be of no use to him. Staying alive was what really matter.

“Arise.”

Ning naturally possessed the techniques needed to use a Five Elements Cauldron. He was even capable of creating one anew, much less merely using one.

However, the Empyrean God of Pangaea who had formerly owned the cauldron did not know these techniques. In fact, his clan had never even heard of it. Generally speaking, only the major powers of the primordial chaos would have access to Five Elements Cauldrons, as only truly

powerful figures would be willing to throw so many precious treasures into a cauldron and destroy them. The only reason why Ning himself had so many treasures was because he had the prisonworld.

Rumble...

The dirty-looking Five Elements Cauldron had been silent for countless years. And now, it finally had a chance to reveal its brilliance. Five streaks of light shot out from its five handles, shooting towards the skies.

“Go.” Ning pointed towards the cauldron, and ten top-grade Pure Yang treasures were instantly flung into it. Ning had already completely swept through all the Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals of the prisonworld, and he had a simply enormous amount of top-grade Pure Yang treasures. Every single Empyrean God and Celestial Immortal had quite a few; Celestial Immortal Liangqiu, for example, had possessed more than seven hundred flying swords. One of the prisoners had more than ten thousand top-grade Pure Yang treasures!

Ning just threw in ten to test it out.

Hissssssss.

Like snow being thrown into a furnace, a series of hissing, crackling sounds could be heard as all ten Pure Yang treasures were completely annihilated, leaving behind just a few tiny bits of debris. The essence of the Five Elements flowed into the holding region for the Five Elements located within the cauldron.

“How savage.” Ning pointed, and with a series of whooshes, a dense cluster of at least ten thousand flying shuttles all flew into the Five Elements Cauldron.

Crack! Crack! Crack! Crack! All the Pure Yang treasures started to splinter.

“Uh oh.” Ning could sense that his energy was depleting at a rapid pace. He hurriedly pulled out a Pure Yang Immortal pill and tossed it into his mouth. “World God Northrest actually neglected to notify me that using the Five Elements Cauldron to destroy treasures and refine them into

essence is a process that uses up an enormous amount of energy.” But what he had forgotten was that the clone he was using to control the cauldron merely had a third-tier Pure Yang Jindan, after all.

World God Northrest was a World God. The amount of energy used up by the cauldron was utterly negligible for him.

“Time to go.”

Ning left behind one clone to refine the treasures into essence for repairing Violetjewel. As for the other seventeen clones, he had all of them leave the prisonworld. The ninety-eight stone steles and jade shrine which World God Northrest had left behind had all been placed into the prisonworld as well. Ning had brought them back, as the pocket dimension Ning had been in collapsed as soon as he left it.

The core of that pocket dimension was the sword Violetjewel. Once Ning took it away, the pocket dimension would naturally crumble, leaving behind no traces of its passing.

A white-robed youth appeared once more on the surface of that frozen star. His other sixteen bodies were located within the estate-treasure he carried alongside him, with fifteen of them focusing on training in the [Icefire Jindan Smelting] technique.

As Ning saw it, of his eighteen clones of his main body, he would have seventeen upgrade their Jindans. The reason he was going to leave one behind was because he was going to leave it in the prisonworld and let it focus on operating the cauldron. That one would remain un-upgraded, in case that Ning’s other bodies were all destroyed in the war in the Three Realms.

Once they were destroyed, the remaining body could use chaos nectar to quickly rebuild the other seventeen! Ning would then be able to simply use more Ninefire Lava and Iceheart Pith to re-upgrade their Jindans.

But if he was to upgrade his Jindan to the second-tier, allowing him to become a half-step Daofather, then the cost of remaking seventeen clones would become considerably higher, perhaps requiring ten times the amount of chaos nectar. Ning had very little chaos nectar left; there was

simply no way he could afford that.

“160,000 kilograms of Ninefire Lava, 160,000 kilograms of Iceheart Pith. That’ll be enough for fifteen clones of my true body and seventeen clones of my Primaltwin.” Ning nodded. As for the remaining amount, he left it all behind within the prisonworld.

Ning was going to leave behind a ‘seed’ of both his true body and his Primaltwin, just to be safe. No one could predict what was going to happen within this tribulation. Even though he was now much more powerful, Ning was still going to be cautious.

“Time to meet the Godking.”

Whoosh.

Ning flew out from the frozen star.

Right now, the war for the Deerchaser world was a pivotal moment in the war for karmic luck!

Many of his friends and brothers had died in battle, causing Ning to wish to participate as well. And indeed, he now had the power to make a difference. The so-called ‘Envoy of All Things’? Ning was confident in being able to deal with it! But before doing so, he had to first rescue Yu Wei. Otherwise, once he revealed his full power on the Deerchaser world, the Godking would most likely have second thoughts and once more use Yu Wei to blackmail him.

Thus...

He had to first rescue his wife.

Only then could he return to the Deerchaser world!

.....

Whoosh.

A white-robed youth appeared out of nowhere within the northern seas of the Grand Xia.

Although the Seamless Gate had been defeated in the war for the Grand

Xia, they had still launched repeated, minor incursions against the world. True Immortal Dongyan had died in one such clash.

“Eh?” Ning spread out his heartforce, quickly discovering one of the Seamless Gate’s bases in the northern seas.

“I am Darknorth. I wish to speak to the Godking of your Seamless Gate. Make the report right away,” Ning sent mentally.

The base was only staffed by a Celestial Immortal. Upon hearing Ning’s mental message, he was badly frightened. He was of the Grand Xia; naturally, he knew of the legendary power of Ji Ning, Empyrean God Darknorth. Darknorth was someone who had roamed the Three Realms and slaughtered many members of the Seamless Gate.

The Celestial Immortal put everything else aside and immediately made a report to his master.

.....

The Deerchaser major world.

The black-robed Godking and Daomother Devilhand were both standing atop the castle walls, staring at the vast wilderness in front of them. The great army of the Seamless Gate filled the wilderness, and they were calling for the enemies to come engage them in battle.

“They remain behind their fortifications, not daring to come out and fight.” The black-robed Godking laughed.

“Yesterday, quite a few True Gods and Daofathers of the Nuwa Alliance descended upon the castle. It seems they are discussing what to do about this war.” Daomother Devilhand laughed coldly, “Hmph. What sort of ideas can these major powers possibly come up with? The Envoys of All Things were devised by the Lord of All Things. What, does the Nuwa Alliance think that they can also create a golem of this level?”

“How could they? The Lord of All Things was someone capable of bringing disaster to two chaosworlds and nearly destroying them both.” The black-robed Godking laughed. “Not even the protective formations which Mother Nuwa left behind are able to withstand the Envoys. They

are definitely going to lose-...eh?"

Daomother Devilhand looked towards the Godking, puzzled.

The black-robed Godking laughed. "It's fine. A young fellow wishes to meet with me."

"A young fellow?" Daomother Devilhand was puzzled. "Who?"

"That Ji Ning kid, who once forced me to bow my head before him..."
The black-robed Godking laughed softly.

"Ji Ning?" Daomother Devilhand nodded. "A mere Emphyrean God/True Immortal. Hurry up and deal with this minor matter. This war before us is the critical pivot on which our chances of winning the war for karmic luck shall turn. This is what truly matters."

"Yes, aunt-master," the black-robed Godking assented.

Chapter 12: Wishful Thinking

The world of the Grand Xia. An island atop the great Darknorth Sea.

Ji Ning was viewing the scenery before him. Although it was winter, the innate heat within this island kept it in perpetual spring. The island blossomed with flowers and was quite beautiful to behold.

“Senior apprentice-sister.”

“We’re going to meet again soon. Our family will be reunited.” Ning still remembered how she looked, all those years ago, when she stroked her belly as she watched him train in the sword. That warm, loving environment...ever since the destruction of Shennong’s medicine and the shattering her soul, it had completely disappeared. For the sake of getting it back, Ning had risked his life and had done everything he could possibly do. Thankfully, he had been lucky enough to acquire the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] evasion technique, had been lucky enough to possess powerful heartforce, and had been lucky enough that senior Fuxi had created the Rahu Formation for him. This was the reason why he had been able to force the Seamless Gate to bow its head.

Finally...he and his daughter was going to be reunited with his wife. The three of them would be reunited once more, as a family.

Rumble...

A ripple of power descended. Startled, Ning turned his head to look.

A black-robed man was standing at the end of an upraised path in the distance. The black-robed man sauntered towards him, a smile on his face. “This island isn’t bad. It’s quite beautiful. Your Primaltwin remains on the Deerchaser world, but your true body has appeared. It seems you have emerged from Undermoon Lake.”

“Yes.” Ning nodded.

“Formidable, formidable.” The black-robed Godking nodded, letting out a sigh of praise. “To tell you the truth, Ji Ning...although the two of us are on enemy sides, I admit I’m quite shocked and impressed that you were

able to emerge from Undermoon Lake in just six hundred short years. Jueming entered during the Primordial Era and was only able to escape during the Three Realms era.”

Ning said, “I’ve emerged. Isn’t it time for you to hold to your promise?”

“Did you bring the treasures I asked for?” The black-robed Godking laughed, “Per what I originally said, I would only release Yu Wei’s soul to you once you gave the treasures to me.”

“I brought them.” Ning’s heartrate began to speed up uncontrollably, but he was able to remain calm.

“I trust that you have the other two treasures...but what of the Iceheart Leaf?” The black-robed Godking laughed.

Ning waved his hand. A semi-transparent, crystalline Iceheart Leaf suddenly appeared, levitating above his hands.

“It really is an Iceheart Leaf.” The black-robed Godking inspected it carefully, a slightly intoxicated look in his eyes. “It really is quite beautiful, just as the legends said it to be. This is my first time to see an Iceheart Leaf in person. Mmm...alright. You can destroy it now.”

“Destroy it?” Ning’s heart sank. What was the meaning of this? Why was he being told to bring, then destroy the Iceheart Leaf?

“Now that I’ve seen it, it’s of no further use to me.” The black-robed Godking looked at Ning. “I just wanted the chance to look at it, that’s all.”

“I brought you the treasures that you asked for. Please give my senior apprentice-sister’s soul back to me,” Ning immediately said.

“Ahaha....” The black-robed Godking let out an ear-piercing laugh, an uproarious laugh, a crazy laugh. He laughed so hard, tears nearly came out of his eyes. His entire body trembled from laughter as he pointed a quavering hand at Ning. “Oh, Ji Ning, Ji Ning...and to think that you are a ‘peerless genius of this age’. Haven’t you understood yet? When I told you to get me Iceheart Leaf, I simply wanted to force you into Undermoon Lake. The leaf, the other treasures...although they are of some use to me as a Daofather, they are meaningless to the Seamless Gate as a whole.

Did you really think I would care about those three treasures?”

“All I wanted was for you to enter Undermoon Lake!”

“Although you managed to emerge after six hundred years...it was enough. It was enough. Our ‘Three Realms infiltration phase’ is complete. Our Seamless Gate is battling against your Nuwa Alliance on the Deerchaser world, and soon the entire war for karmic luck will be at an end. The infiltration phase is over. It no longer matters.” The black-robed Godking roared with laughter. “If you came out after just one or two centuries, I’d probably have to come up with something else, but six hundred years? You are no longer a threat.”

“No threat at all.”

“Nowadays, our Seamless Gate’s forces are sent out in massive armies. You, a mere True Immortal with that feeble Rahu-something formation... what can you possibly do?” The black-robed Godking continued to roar with ear-piercing laughter like a madman.

Years ago, the Godking had been forced by Ning to bow his head. The Godking had been enraged to the point of wanting to kill Ning, but it wasn’t appropriate for him to personally act. However, the chance to see Ning enraged, see Ning feel despair...that would be even more delightful than simply killing him.

As the black-robed Godking laughed with abandon, he kept a careful watch over Ning, noting every single change in expression. He wanted to see Ning’s face become filled with panic and despair. Only then would the demon in his heart be satisfied! Other Immortal cultivators might be afraid of their dark side, but the Godking was a cultivator of Lord Demonheart’s arts. He himself was the veritable incarnation of a mental devil, while his master was the Lord of the Demonheart.

But...he was disappointed.

Ning just stood there. Stood there, not reacting at all.

Crack. Something suddenly seemed to shatter.

That woman who had quietly, blissfully watched with a smile on her

face as Ning had trained in the sword...she was never coming back.

Pain!

Ning felt agonizing pain in his heart. Pain that made him feel nauseous. Pain that was about to drive him insane. He wanted to laugh...he wanted to roar...but he couldn't make any sound at all. For many years now, the karmic sinflames had been constantly burning against his body, but Ning had never cared about the pain they brought. In this moment, however... the pain he felt was ten thousand times greater than the pain from the karmic sinflames.

“Ha...haha...”

Suddenly, a dry laugh rattled out from Ning's mouth.

He sounded almost like a toddler who had just learned how to speak.

“Aha...ahaha...ahahaha....” Ning began to laugh wildly. He finally began to laugh, and his tears finally began to fall as well.

Upon seeing this, the black-robed Godking finally let out a satisfied smile. This was more like it. This was the reaction he had expected. For a brief moment, just now, the man hadn't been reacting at all.

“Ahahaha...I knew all along that you weren't worthy of my trust...” Ning's eyes were completely bloodshot now. He laughed wildly, “I knew it all along. You, ‘Godking’, you toy with the hearts of men, causing chaos throughout the Three Realms. How could your promises be worth believing? But I still chose to believe, and I even entered Undermoon Lake, doing everything I could to return as soon as possible.”

“I even impatiently ran over here to hand those three treasures over to you. I knew that your promises were as worthless as dogshit...but I still came. I held onto hope. A tiny shred of hope...hope...hope that she would be able to come back.”

“I hoped that she would be able to come back.”

“Brightmoon and I...we miss her. I want our family to be together again. That's all I want. My family to be together.”

“But you...finally...you have finally destroyed my last bit of hope. You destroyed it.” Ning laughed so madly, he was shaking. “Ahaha...it was all just wishful thinking...I was just dreaming. I was lying to myself this entire time. Lying to myself. Telling myself that we could still be together. What a joke. I am such a joke. A joke!”

The black-robed Godking could sense how the heart of the youth before him had shattered. Could sense his agony. His despair. The destruction of that last shred of hope.

The Godking...was satisfied.

Was pleased.

This was more like it. This was true agony. This was true heartbreak.

The Godking looked at Ning. “It is time for you to wake up. You need to understand that at this current stage of the war, a single Empyrean God like you cannot have any impact at all. By now, only a large number of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals joined together will have any effect. Still...I’m a man who appreciates talent.”

“I’ll once more invite you to join the Seamless Gate. So long as you are willing to join us, you’ll immediately be able to reunite with your wife. Don’t you wish to be with her? Don’t you wish for your daughter to reunite with her mother? If you join the Seamless Gate, it will all happen. As a member of the Seamless Gate, you’ll be one of us...and I’ll naturally stop plotting against you. In fact, I’ll be quite good to you. You are a true expert amongst Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, after all. Although you won’t be able to change the course of the entire war for karmic luck, you’ll still be of some use.”

“If you join the Seamless Gate now, you’ll be able to reunite with your wife. But if you refuse...well. She’ll be of no further use to me. I’ll kill her. I’ll shatter her soul. Ahahaha...”

“You have no other choices.” The black-robed Godking looked at Ning.

Ning...was still bent over with laughter. “Joke. I’m a joke.”

“Thank you.” Ning straightened his back, raising his head to stare

unblinkingly at the black-robed Godking.

The black-robed Godking's heart skipped a beat.

What sort of a look was that? Such powerful heartforce...such a terrible gaze. If this was the gaze of an ordinary mortal, the Godking wouldn't care at all, but this was Ji Ning, who had reached the fourth stage of heartforce. The black-robed Godking could sense that behind that gaze, there was an endless, blazing, burning hatred that not all the waters of the Three Realms would suffice to quench.

A desire to kill that had seeped into his spirit...his very truesoul itself.

"Thank you for destroying my hopes. Thank you for bringing my wishful thoughts to an end. Thank you...for freeing me from all my doubts."

"Let's take it slow, you and I. The day is still young. Soon...I will make sure to properly thank you for all you have done."

After speaking, Ning turned and left, transforming into a streak of light.

"If you refuse, your wife will be useless to me. I will kill her," the black-robed Godking immediately howled after him.

"My wife is already dead. I killed her!" Ning's voice echoed in the air, but he himself had already departed from the Grand Xia.

Chapter 13: A Month From Now

The black-robed Godking stood there at the island, staring into the skies. Ji Ning had already departed from this place.

“Hmph.” The black-robed Godking laughed coldly. “He cares deeply about love, and yet is able to sever it. Quite an impressive figure. During ordinary times, I might need to be concerned about you...but now? The war is in full swing. Soon, even the major powers shall begin to die in large swathes. A single Empyrean God...nothing more than a minor character.”

Whoosh. The black-robed Godking left behind as well. The only thing left behind was that beautiful island, where countless flowers continued to bloom.

.....

The Deerchaser world.

Atop the walls of the Seamless Citadel. Daomother Devilhand and the black-robed Godking continued to stare at their army, spread throughout the vast wilderness. Their army was calling out for battle, but the Nuwa Alliance refused to come out and fight.

“That little kid.” The black-robed Godking suddenly let out a low, cold chuckle.

“Eh?” Daomother Devilhand looked towards him.

“Ji Ning.” The black-robed Godking laughed, “Just now, I sent one of my incarnations to go meet with him. I toyed with him for a bit.”

Daomother Devilhand said calmly, “Given how far the war for karmic luck has advanced, a single Empyrean God like him is no longer a threat to us.”

“I know. That’s why there’s no way I would possibly give Yu Wei’s soul back to him. Even if it’s useless to me, Ji Ning can forget about getting it,” the black-robed Godking said with a calm laugh. “Don’t worry, aunt-master. I won’t spend too much of my time on that kid. The big picture is

what really matters, and the issue before us is the war for karmic luck. As for that Ji Ning? If an opportunity arises, I'll use it to dispose of him. If no opportunity comes, then I won't bother with him. Spending time and effort on him is a waste of my energy."

"Mm. It's good that you know what matters." Daomother Devilhand nodded calmly.

Boom. Boom. Boom.

Their army flew through the air in an awe-inspiring horde that covered the skies as they returned to the Seamless Citadel.

"Eh?" The black-robed Godking raised his head. He saw a distant black bolt of lightning flash in the skies, followed by a streak of light flying into the distant, hovering citadel of the Nuwa Alliance. The Godking cracked his lips into a grin. "It's Ji Ning."

.....

The Deerchaser world. The hanging citadel of the Nuwa Alliance.

Ji Ning's residence.

Whoosh. The white-robed Ning waved his hand, and the black-robed Ning in front of him was drawn into the portable estate-world.

The world inside the treasure was an entire world of its own, with mountain peaks soaring into the skies. There were a total of 319 mountain peaks, which served as the 'foundational pillars' of this world, ensuring its stability.

A number of white-robed youths were all seated on their respective mountain peaks, training in the [Icefire Jindan Smelting] technique.

Whoosh.

Seventeen black-robed Ning's appeared as well. As with his true bodies, Ning had only brought seventeen of his Primaltwin clones here. He had left one behind to accompany his daughter, Brightmoon.

Whooooooooosh. Ninefire Lava and Iceheart Pith began to fly out.

The seventeen black-robed Ning's separated from each other, each occupying a mountain peak of their own. They then began to train in the [Icefire Jindan Smelting] technique as well.

The 'original' white-robed Ning remained standing within that distant courtyard. He waved his hand, and instantly a large horde of people appeared within it.

"Brother Darknorth."

"Where is this place?"

"Brother Darknorth, we've been waiting for centuries. You've finally let us out."

"Eh? Where are we?"

The throng of Empyrean Gods that had just appeared were Empyrean Gods Sin and Sealthroat, the Seven Dragon Gods, Empyrean God Feiyou, Empyrean God Cloudscar, and the rest of the two hundred-plus Empyrean Gods of Undermoon Lake. Each of them was extraordinarily powerful.

"Is this...the Deerchaser major world?" Empyrean God Roughpeak suddenly said, stunned.

"Deerchaser?"

"The Three Realms."

"We've returned."

The Empyrean Gods quickly grew excited by this revelation. They each began to spread out their coresense, causing the already-present Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Nuwa Alliance to notice them...and realize to their astonishment that these coresenses seemed to be of old friends and brothers that they had not seen for a long, long time.

Soon, quite a few Empyrean Gods hastened to Ning's place.

"Ah!? Oddwitch, it really is you! I thought my senses were fooling me."

"S-senior apprentice-brother! Y-you...are still alive!?"

Ning's residence quickly became quite a lively place...and in the

commotion, no one noticed that Ning had quietly departed.

Traveling alone, Ning headed towards the palace where Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan resided.

There were guards outside the palace.

“Empyrean God Darknorth, there are many major powers who are convening inside right now. They must not be disturbed,” a golden-armored guard said.

“Help me relay a message. Tell them that I have extremely important information for my master,” Ning said.

The golden-armored guard was slightly startled. If Ning had insisted on seeing Xuan Yuan, he would’ve stopped him, but since Ning just wanted to meet with his own master...it wasn’t really appropriate for him to stand in the way. He immediately nodded. “Empyrean God Darknorth, just wait a moment. I’ll send the word right now.”

Ning nodded. He stood there quietly, waiting.

His master, Xuan Yuan, Suiren, and other major powers were all gathered here. If Ning wished to meet them, he naturally would have to act in a proper manner and pay his respects accordingly. He couldn’t just sweep out his heartforce or send a mental message to them from afar; that would be far too brash!

A short while later, the golden-armored guard returned. He gave Ning a curious look. “His Imperial Majesty said to let you in.”

When he had made the report, Xuan Yuan, Daoist Three Purities, and the others all said the same thing: ‘Let Ji Ning come in.’ This caused this guard, who was merely a Celestial Immortal, to be extremely puzzled.

Ning nodded, then stepped forward onto the stairs.

He walked through the corridor, passing into an extremely wide plaza as he walked towards a great hall. Even before entering, Ning was able to make out the seated figures within the great hall. All of them were major powers of the Three Realms. There weren’t that many of them here. This

was mainly because all of the major powers had hastened here after the appearance of the Envoy of All Things. After their day of initial discussions, some of the major powers had left.

“Come in.” Xuan Yuan’s voice rang out, and Ning entered the palace.

There really weren’t that many True Gods/Daofathers inside, just eighteen in total. However, the most puissant powers were all present. Daoist Three Purities, Lord Tathagata the Buddha, Shennong, Fuxi, and Suiren were all present. Subhuti was seated there as well, and he nodded towards Ning. He was responsible for keeping watch over the Seamless Gate’s actions, and so he already knew of Ning’s meeting with the Godking and knew what had happened.

He couldn’t help but sigh. He knew that his disciple’s path was a hard one, but one which only his disciple himself could walk.

“Ji Ning.” Xuan Yuan smiled. “We learned just a moment ago that you brought more than two hundred Empyrean Gods back from Undermoon Lake. And...I can sense that all of them have extremely powerful auras. All of them are top-tier Empyrean Gods, and some of them are quite shockingly powerful. To gain the allegiance of such a group of Empyrean Gods during the war for karmic luck is helpful for our side.”

“You came out after six centuries. You were much faster than Jueming,” Lord Tathagata said with a smile.

“Disciple.” Subhuti spoke out. “Why have you sought me?”

All the major powers were watching Ning. Even the weakest of these eighteen were top-tier Daofathers! Before Ning had arrived, they were pondering the question of how to deal with the Envoy of All Things.

Ning had just brought them two hundred more Empyrean Gods, which was quite a pleasing bit of news to them, as many of these Empyrean Gods were their disciples. But this was just an emotional bit of pleasure. They knew very well that the addition of these Empyrean Gods would have very little impact on the big picture. In the last battle alone, they had lost nearly six hundred!

As for the Envoy, using Empyrean Gods and True Immortals against it was useless. Empyrean Gods and True Immortals had to rely on formations in order to unleash sufficient amounts of power. True Immortal Jimin, commanding a Pangu Genesis Formation, had already reached what they believed to be the theoretical maximum level of power that could be unleashed by an Empyrean God or True Immortal when wielding a formation. They couldn't come up with any better ideas at all.

"The Envoy of All Things," Ning said.

"The Envoy?" Subhuti was startled. All the major powers were startled. The only reason why they had been willing to meet with Ning was to thank him for having rescued so many Empyrean Gods...but now, all of them instantly turned quite serious.

"Can the Seamless Gate eavesdrop or spy on this location...?" Ning asked.

"Don't worry. The many major powers of the Three Realms are all gathered here, and we have each employed our own methods to block out spying. Even the Heavenly Daos themselves have been blocked off," Subhuti said.

Ning was startled. A moment later, he realized that this was true. He couldn't even sense the Heavenly Daos in this place. This was testament to how agitated he was, that he hadn't even noticed this.

"Speak." Subhuti looked at his disciple.

"The Envoy of All Things is quite formidable. However, your disciple's clones have departed Undermoon Lake after six hundred years, and all memories have been joined together once more. Your disciple has a way to deal with the Envoy of All Things," Ning said solemnly.

"You have a way?" Exalted Celestial Thundregod, seated nearby, frowned. Although he didn't like Ji Ning, this was something that had to do with the survival of their alliance. He wholeheartedly wanted to come up with a solution for dealing with the Envoy, but none of the major powers present had come up with any ideas. For Ji Ning to suddenly claim that he had a solution caused Thundergod to frown. "Are you aware that

the Envoy of All Things is comparable to a top-tier Daofather in power? You, an Empyrean God, have a method of dealing with it?"

"When the Envoy of All Things appeared, I was by Master's side on the city walls," Ning said respectfully. The meaning of this was clear; he knew exactly how powerful the Envoy was.

"You really have an idea?" Yu the Great, the founder of the Primordial Imperial Clan, was seated close by. He couldn't help but ask this question.

Ning nodded, his eyes filled with unprecedented self-confidence and determination. "Elders, please give me just a month. A month from now, I, Ji Ning...shall go and deal with the Envoy of All Things."

"War is not a joking matter. This will have implications for the lives of countless Immortals and Fiendgods." The commander of their army, Xuan Yuan, spoke out in a solemn voice.

"This junior wouldn't dare to make such a joke." Ning spoke out in an equally solemn manner.

"Fine." Xuan Yuan nodded. "I trust that you know that in war, one cannot make idle promises. Since you've promised it, a month from now I will order our army to once more battle the Seamless Gate."

Chapter 14: True Body

Ji Ning departed respectfully.

The supreme figures of the Nuwa Alliance within the hall watched as Ning departed. They then exchanged glances. Clearly, they all had their doubts and concerns.

“Everyone...do you believe that Darknorth truly has a solution?” Exalted Celestial Thundergod couldn’t but say, “It’s not that I look down on him; rather, we all know exactly how powerful the Envoy is. When the Lord of All Things led his army of Envoys, he nearly wiped out both the Pangu Chaosworld and the Seamless Chaosworld. Fortunately, Mother Nuwa made her breakthrough and swept through all challengers. Although this Envoy before us is merely under the command of an Empyrean God, it still definitely has the power of a top-tier Daofather. Ji Ning...I really can’t imagine how he can come up with any solution.”

“Mm.”

“I can’t imagine it either. What could he possibly do?”

“Can it be that his swordforce or his heartforce has reached the fifth stage?” Emperor Zhuanxu frowned.

“The fifth stage isn’t that easy to reach. Swordforce and heartforce increase exponentially in difficulty with each stage. The fifth stage is harder to reach than becoming a True God or Daofather.” Xuan Yuan slowly shook his head. “He’s just returned from Undermoon Lake. My best guess is that he must’ve acquired some sort of treasure in Undermoon Lake. Something which allows him, an Empyrean God and True Immortal, to be able to unleash the power of a top-tier Daofather.”

“Can such a treasure truly exist?” Exalted Celestial Thundergod was puzzled.

“They do. For example...” Xuan Yuan said softly, “The Envoy of All Things! If Ji Ning also had an Envoy, given the power he displayed in overcoming Undermoon Lake, he could probably defeat the enemy.”

Everyone present blinked.

“Everyone, we’ve been guessing all along that Undermoon Lake was created by an ancient major power, yes?” Xuan Yuan chuckled. “That major power must have been shockingly powerful; it’s not impossible that he might’ve left behind a golem comparable to an Envoy of All Things. But of course, that’s just a guess. The other possibility is that Ji Ning is so infuriated that he’s completely overestimated himself.”

“Ji Ning is an Empyrean God and True Immortal; there’s no way he would be that unreliable.” Shennong frowned as he spoke in a calm voice.

“The person who knows Ji Ning best is his master.” Fuxi looked towards Subhuti.

Everyone present looked towards Subhuti. Quite a few people had spoken, but thus far Subhuti had yet to say a thing.

Subhuti frowned, then said slowly, “Xuan Yuan...it’s best if you still make preparations in the event of defeat.”

“Oh?” Xuan Yuan was startled.

The hearts of everyone present sunk.

Subhuti said nothing else. He didn’t want to reveal all of Ning’s secrets to everyone! Still, in Subhuti’s heart, he was indeed a bit nervous. He knew that throughout the course of history, from the Primordial Era to the present day, the word ‘love’ had caused quite a few major powers to be driven mad. Even Houyi, whose heartforce had reached the fifth stage, was unable to escape from this word, ‘love’.

Subhuti himself wasn’t sure as to how heavy a mental blow Ning had been delivered by what had just happened.

“Fine. I’ll make complete preparations.” Xuan Yuan nodded.

.....

News of the return of more than two hundred Empyrean Gods quickly spread throughout the Three Realms. The Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Three Realms all heard that the return of all these

people was thanks to Ji Ning.

Far away, in the Celestial Realm. Mount Ling, in the eastern lands.

Buddha Jueming's palace was a simple, plain, unadorned one. There were only two novice monks here, guarding the entrance. He only became truly famous in the Three Realms after returning from Undermoon Lake, then training to become a True God and Daofather. Ever since then, he had never caused much of a stir, as he had lived here in seclusion by himself.

"Mm?" Buddha Jueming was seated in the lotus position. Slowly, he opened his eyes. "Undermoon Lake? Empyrean God Darknorth overcame Undermoon Lake?"

"Has Darknorth also acquired [Forlorn World God] and [Nine Elements Annihilation]?" Buddha Jueming mused to himself. The [Forlorn World God]...it was indeed the best Fiendgod Body Refiner technique that World God Northrest had access to which could be taught to others. Right now, Ning was indeed training in the [Forlorn World God].

The key to this technique lay in the word 'Forlorn'.

One would have to search through endless solitude and dullness in order to find the secrets regarding the divine body, then make the breakthrough.

Thus, in order to train in this technique, what one truly needed was silence and calm. Sometimes, a single 'forlorn' meditation session could span ten thousand years or a million years. Buddha Jueming himself was perpetually seated in the meditative posture, and thus he naturally understood the profound secrets to this art. Long ago, it was this art which he used to break through to become a True God.

"So, there is now yet another cultivator of the [Nine Elements Annihilation] and the [Forlorn World God]," Buddha Jueming mused to himself. "The power of this divine ability is truly endless; the only thing one really needs is a long period of time to meditate on it. Unfortunately, Darknorth hasn't spent enough time cultivating. Otherwise, he would be of tremendous benefit in this war."

The longer one cultivated, the more powerful he realized the [Forlorn World God] and the [Nine Elements Annihilation] to be. These two techniques alone were enough to allow one to become an unparalleled expert amongst Elder Gods, and perhaps even break through to the World God stage.

News that Ji Ning was about to enter the fray was kept completely secret. Even the other major powers of the Nuwa Alliance such as Buddha Jueming were not informed.

The only ones who knew were the leaders of Daoism and Buddhism, the Three Emperors, and around ten-plus other major powers. Although they were worried that Ning would fail, they still felt a hint of hope. Naturally, they would keep this a tight secret.

Time passed, one day at a time. In the blink of an eye, a month had gone by.

Within the world of the estate-world.

This was a world of towering mountain peaks. Ning's seventeen true body clones and seventeen Primaltwin clones had all gathered here, at the very top of one of the mountain peaks.

"The Jindan smelting process is complete."

"Time to train in the [One True Body] technique."

The seventeen white-robed youths all sat down in the lotus position together. Slowly, the bodies of two of them began to emit a hazy white light. Their bodies, their Jindans, and their souls were all emanating this hazy white light which was filled with arcane, abstruse divine runes. Ning was completely, slavishly imitating the technique and runes as it had been written down. This technique had been created by a major power of the primordial chaos, and its runes were incredibly profound and mysterious. There was no way Ning could understand these runes at all; all he had to do was memorize them and then replicate them.

Rumble...

The two white-robed youths began to slowly draw closer to each other.

One of them actually ended up flying into the body of the other, causing the aura of white light to dramatically expand.

It was an extremely slow and very relaxed, comfortable process.

It was like a baby bird sleeping inside the egg shell.

It was like a baby child sleeping within the mother's womb.

The ball of white light completely surrounded the blurry figure. In this moment, all thought was impossible. Clearly, the Jindan, soul, and bodies had all begun to merge together. Only things that had come from the same source could merge together in such a manner. The divine bodies, Jindans, and souls of these clones were all absolutely identical. There were no differences whatsoever!

If there was even the slightest bit of difference, the merger would become impossible.

For example, Ning's Primaltwin had been formed through a Sole-Ki Pearl of Primalwater. Thus, there were a major differences between it and Ning's true body. And so, there was no way whatsoever for the Primaltwin and the true body to merge together! But of course, the eighteen Primaltwin clones could all merge into each other.

Whoosh.

The blurry white light completely faded away, withdrawing into the remaining clone's body. The white-robed figure emerged once more, and it once more became capable of thought. As Ning regained his senses, he could immediately sense how his body had changed. "My divine power has transformed in some way. The Pure Yang energy in my Jindan has become more pure, and the Jindan region has expanded in size by a bit. My soul has become more powerful as well...even my heartforce has grown considerably stronger."

When two completely identical souls fused together, the resultant soul would of course be much stronger. This sort of fusion would result in an upgrade in every single aspect and area.

Long ago, when the King of Pangaea had been an Elder God, he had

relied on mastering the complete [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] to join his clones together, allowing him to surpass other Elder Gods in every single aspect. It had given him overwhelmingly superior power.

“Continue.”

Whoosh.

Yet another white-robed youth was drawn into the first one's body. The first clone's body continued to rise in power, and the soul, divine power, heartforce, and Pure Yang energy all continued to evolve.

One clone after another was absorbed into the first one.

The [One True Body] technique relied on the fact that all the clones originated from the same source. This was the reason why the technique could work. The more clones were absorbed, the more powerful one would become. If Ning had been able to train in the even more ridiculous [Thousand Bodies Sutra], he would've been able to fuse a thousand clones together. The increase in power would be even more ridiculous, in that case, allowing an Empyrean God to become the equivalent of a True God, and a True God to become the equivalent of an Elder God. An Elder God would become the equivalent of a World God!

This was what made the [Thousand Bodies Sutra] to be such an unearthly, almighty technique! But alas, the price of training in this technique was simply too great. For even a weak Empyrean God to train in it would require a Worldheart to be consumed. The price that would need to be paid for someone more powerful would be truly incalculable. Which World God would be willing to part with a Worldheart, giving it away to an Empyrean God for cultivation? Even if the Empyrean God was to succeed, that person would still be tremendously weak and unable to help the World God at all. It would only make a difference if the Empyrean God was able to train all the way to become an Elder God...but in the path of Immortal cultivation, advancing through every single major stage saw tremendous difficulties. Far, far too many cultivators were washed out at each stage.

Whoosh.

With each merger, Ning continued to transform.

Finally, all seventeen white-robed youths had merged into one. Into one true body.

“What a strange sensation.” Ning looked at his surroundings. His soul was now far more powerful than it had been before, and even the rate at which he gained insights into the Dao was now far faster. Even though he previously was able to simultaneously train with thirty-six different bodies, the speed at which he gained insights was less than his current speed, after his one true body had been formed.

“This...is this the level of Daofathers?” Ning murmured softly to himself.

Seventeen clones, each of which had second-tier Jindans. Now that they had merged together into one true body, the power of the Jindan inside his body was comparable to first-tier Jindans! True Immortals of Pangaea with first-tier Jindans were indeed on the same level of power as the Daofathers of the Three Realms, and in fact they actually had deeper reservoirs of energy.

“My energy is on the level of a Daofather’s.”

“My divine body has surpassed the limits of an Empyrean God; it can be considered a half-step into the True God level.”

“My soul...it should have thirty to forty percent of the might of an ordinary Daofather’s soul. In order for my soul to reach the level of a true Daofather, I’ll need to spend another century nourishing it. Of my seventeen clones, two had long ago gained second-tier Jindans, and so their souls had been nourished significantly. The other fifteen had only just recently upgraded to second-tier Jindans. Their souls didn’t have enough time to evolve.”

Ning understood this principle. Still...it was enough.

His true body’s soul was already more than a hundred times stronger than that of an ordinary True Immortal’s. Daofathers could easily cover the Three Realms with the coresense, while Ning could perhaps just

barely do the same, if he went all out. As for Empyrean Gods and True Immortals? They generally were only capable of covering a major world with their coresense. From this, one could easily see the difference in soul power!

“Compared to Daofather Holyflame...let’s see. We have equivalent levels of energy. I have more technically profound sword-arts, but his have been infused with the Heavenly Dao of Fire. However...I have a Darknorth sword that is a Chaos weapon.” Ning nodded to himself. “In terms of power...my true body should be comparable to Daofather Holyflame.”

“If I were to use the Rahu Formation...”

“I would be given a divine body that was comparable to that of a top-tier Daofather. In that case, my total power would surpass Daofather Holyflame’s.”

“Defeating the Envoy of All Things will be simplicity itself!”

Ning willed his aura to be retracted into his body. Instantly, the incredible aura of power surrounding him, an aura comparable to a Daofather’s, was completely retracted inside of him. This wasn’t the aura-hiding technique which Subhuti had taught him; it was one of the many techniques which World God Northrest had left behind for him. While wandering the primordial chaos, one would easily perish if one’s power was revealed for all others to know.

The estate-world treasure which Ning was within was something which he had acquired from a True God of the prisonworld. Not even Elder Gods or Ancestral Immortals would be able to spy on it.

Whoosh.

Ning turned to look towards the side. Next to him were the black-robed Ning’s, and they were in the process of fusing together as well. Soon, they transformed into a single black-robed Ning. This Ning also had the power of a top-tier Daofather.

“There’s not much of a difference between fusing eighteen clones and

fusing seventeen clones. It's best to leave one behind as a 'seed'. If I'm going to war against the Seamless Gate...best to remain cautious." Ning willed it, and with a swoosh he disappeared from the estate-world.

.....

The Starseizer major world. A large shrine.

"We pay our respects to you, Manorlord!"

Empyrean God Ninefangs and Empyrean God Snow Scorpion, upon seeing Ning suddenly appear, hastily bowed towards him.

"Ninefangs, summon the army immediately," Ning instructed.

"Yes." Ninefangs immediately went to make the arrangements.

"Has Redsnow left seclusion?" Ning looked towards Snow Scorpion, who shook her head and laughed. "Redsnow is still in seclusion. I really have no idea when he will emerge."

"No rush." Ning nodded, then immediately walked outside. Ninefangs remained the weakest of the seven, and was also the last to become an Empyrean God. Thus, he was also the most industrious of the seven, and many of the miscellaneous tasks were left for him to handle.

Soon, the plaza before the shrine became filled with a teeming horde of Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals.

Whoosh.

A white-robed youth emerged from the divine hall. Instantly, the throng of Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals turned their gazes towards him, Ji Ning. They all called out respectfully, "Manorlord."

"Assemble the formation," Ning commanded.

Instantly, the countless Immortals all flew into the air together. Ning flew to the very center of the host of Immortals, and the energy of Heaven and Earth began to flow into him in such a flow that it was affecting the entire Starseizer world. An utterly ferocious, titanic Fiendgod began to emerge. His body was pitch-black, but his lower back was covered with extremely fine strands of silver fur. Six burly, thick arms grew out from

the body. Then, a head that was rather similar to Ning's own head grew out and emerged as well.

The Rahu God had manifested.

"This body is far more powerful than a True God's body." Ning's six hands clenched tightly into fists. Boom! Space itself was trembling.

Chapter 15: To Battle

“Excellent. Using Daofather-level energy to command the Rahu Formation is indeed much easier. I’m able to control all of the natural energy which has been summoned by these 90,000 Celestial Immortals and 8 million Loose Immortals.” Ji Ning could sense the full power of the Rahu God.

The difference between his current Daofather-level energy and his former True Immortal-level energy was simply enormous. For a True Immortal to command this mighty formation was like forcing a child to lift up a large boulder. A Daofather doing the same was like letting a strongman do the same. With Ning’s fundamentals changed, the difficulty he faced in controlling formation naturally changed as well.

Given that his soul was now much more powerful as well...he was able to effortlessly command the full force of the Rahu Formation!

“Seamless Gate.” A hint of a murderous look flashed through the Rahu-Ning’s eyes.

.....

Within the levitating castle.

A black-robed Ning had appeared out of nowhere within Ning’s residence. The black-robed Ning raised his head, staring into the skies. Large plumes of snow had begun to drift downwards.

“It’s snowing,” Ning murmured softly to himself.

When he had met with the Godking in the Grand Xia, it was in the heart of winter as well, but back then Ning’s heart had been blazing with eagerness. But now...it had become nothing short of an iceberg.

“It is time to meet with senior Xuan Yuan.” The black-robed Ning walked out of his own residence and towards Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan’s palace. While walking over, he noted that the mood was quite gloomy. The Seamless Gate had called for battle on numerous occasions, but the Nuwa Alliance had yet to respond at all. This caused all of the

Immortals and Fiendgods on their side to worry...did they really have no response at all for the Envoy of All Things? Although Ning chatted a bit with the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals he met on the way, he could sense the tremendous pressure his friends were under.

This war was one in which the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would risk their lives, after all.

A short while later, the black-robed Ning reached Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan's palace.

"Empyrean God Darknorth." The golden-armored guard in front of the palace called out to him, stopping him.

"Please send the word to his Imperial Majesty, the Yellow Emperor. Simply say that Ji Ning is now prepared," the black-robed Ning said.

"Alright." The golden-armored guard nodded.

Ning turned and left.

Within the palace.

The three mighty Sovereigns of Mankind were seated, as were the incarnations of the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism and the true bodies of Xuan Yuan and Subhuti.

"Ji Ning is now prepared." Xuan Yuan smiled as he looked towards Subhuti. "And...what a powerful desire to kill he is radiating!"

"Mm. It is quite intense." Subhuti murmured softly, "Although he is keeping it suppressed deep in his heart...that's what makes the intensity of it so shocking. That's why I told you to make preparations for being defeated, just in case. Although I've always been very confident in this disciple of mine, and although he's never allowed his personal emotions to get in the way of the big picture...we really cannot afford to lose this fight."

"Yes. We cannot afford to lose." Shennong let out a sigh. "We have no other options for dealing with the Envoy of All Things. We just don't have enough power. We have to rely on raw numbers to overwhelm it."

“This is our best chance.” Suiren, Lord Tathagata the Buddha, and the others all nodded.

“If Ji Ning is unsuccessful, we’ll carry out the plan we originally settled upon,” Xuan Yuan said softly. That plan was a calamitous one. Xuan Yuan stilled his emotions, then said, “I’ll assemble the army now.”

“Alright.” Everyone present nodded.

Xuan Yuan immediately instructed two of his disciples, “Give the order to assemble. Prepare to enter combat.”

The order was given. The entire castle instantly exploded into motion as a veritable ocean of Empyrean Gods, True Immortals, Celestial Immortals, and Loose Immortals quickly began to gather together, assembling into great formations.

“The Seamless Gate isn’t even calling out for battle right now. For us to take the initiative to attack...can it be that the major powers have already come up with a way to deal with that ape-shaped monstrosity?”

“If we’re taking the initiative to attack...the major powers might really have a solution.”

“Right.”

“If we don’t deal with that ape-shaped aberration, it will be very hard to win. It’s utterly impenetrable to weapons. Not even fellow Daoist Jimin’s Pangu Genesis Formation was able to harm it in the slightest. If that ape-shaped monstrosity is allowed to go wild...we are going to suffer greatly for it.”

“They surely have a solution.”

The various Empyrean Gods and True Immortals who were the commanders of the formation were all chatting amongst themselves.

Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh.

The Three Sovereigns, the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism, Subhuti, and Xuan Yuan all appeared. They flew through the air as Xuan Yuan called out in a commanding voice, “Exit the citadel!”

Rumble...

The vast, awe-inspiring army flew into the air as well, flying out of the floating citadel and towards the distant wilderness.

Xuan Yuan and the rest of the seven major powers stood atop the city walls, watching from afar. Their disciples, Ning included, quickly assembled behind them atop the walls.

“The disciples under my command do not know that you are going to join the battle. Just now, when I ordered the army to assemble, you weren’t notified.” Xuan Yuan turned to look at the black-robed Ning. “You can go now.”

“Yes.” Ning nodded.

Boom.

An enormous, thirty thousand meter tall Rahu God suddenly appeared out of nowhere. Its face was Ji Ning’s face, and it held a pair of Darknorth swords in its hands, one of which was the one which had become a Chaos treasure.

The Rahu-Ning instantly soared into the skies, heading towards the main army.

“Rahu Formation?”

“Is Ji Ning simply going to use the Rahu Formation?” The faces of Xuan Yuan, Subhuti, the Three Sovereigns, and the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism all changed.

They knew exactly what the strengths and weaknesses of the Rahu Formation were, which made them all the more nervous.

“Ji Ning...has he really lost sight of the big picture?” The reason why Subhuti had previously advised the other major powers to prepare for defeat was simply because this battle was too important; they truly couldn’t afford to lose this war. But upon seeing that Ning’s ‘special ability’ seemingly just consisted of using the Rahu Formation, Subhuti’s heart truly turned cold.

“The Rahu Formation...” Fuxi spoke out. “I created this formation. It is an extremely difficult one, and there aren’t even many Daofathers who are capable of unleashing the full power of this formation. Only a Daofather who has extremely strong heartforce and a soul heartforce technique can truly unleash its power. Ji Ning has not become a Daofather yet. If his meditations into the Dao began to resonate with the Heavenly Daos, we would’ve sensed it long ago.”

“Right.” Everyone present nodded. Mastering a Heavenly Dao would cause a resonance with the Heavenly Daos. It was something that was extremely difficult to hide.

“Ji Ning is not a Daofather, and he’s only capable of unleashing a small part of the full power of the Rahu Formation. Even if his sword-arts are extraordinary, he would at most be capable of matching an ordinary Daofather.” Fuxi shook his head. “Even one of the Seamless Infinity Formations would be able to completely suppress him. As for the Envoy of All Things...that has the power of a top-tier Daofather.”

“Is it possible that Ji Ning has something else planned?” Xuan Yuan couldn’t help but ask this question. He still held hope in the words which Ning had said a month ago.

“Let’s watch for now.” Suiren was frowning as well.

“Have the other Pangu Genesis Formation be prepared,” Daoist Three Purities advised.

“Yes.” Xuan Yuan nodded slowly.

Subhuti didn’t say anything else. He just watched from far away as the Rahu-Ning flew towards the great army of the Nuwa Alliance, his eyes filled with worry.

The walls of the Seamless Citadel. Daomother Devilhand and the black-robed Godking had both appeared.

“The Nuwa Alliance actually dares to call us out for battle?” The Godking laughed.

“We’ve called them out so many times, but they refused to join battle.

For them to actively seek battle this time...they are simply trying to boost their own morale,” Daomother Devilhand said calmly.

The black-robed Godking nodded. “Master and I are fully aware of all their capabilities. They’ve sent yet another five hundred Empyrean Gods and are most likely prepared to form yet another Pangu Genesis Formation. Since they can’t defeat the Envoy one-on-one, they’ve decided to try a two-on-one. They should be planning to have the two Pangu Gods fight against our Envoy.”

“I guessed they would do this.” Daomother Devilhand nodded. “It is much like how we previously were using two Infinity Fiendgods to deal with the Jimin-Pangu. However, there’s a fatal flaw to this plan; simply put, they can’t fight for too long. No matter how well the two work together, as the battle progresses, they will eventually make a mistake.”

“Right.” The black-robed Godking nodded.

If the two Pangu Gods worked well together when fighting against the Envoy of All Things, they’d be able to withstand it. But if their teamwork was poor...they would be in a dangerous situation! The Envoy was utterly unbreakable; not even the leaders of Buddhism or Daoism were capable of actually destroying those terrifying golems.

“Look...” Daomother Devilhand suddenly pointed towards a distant corner. Amongst a group of many Seven Planets Gods, a six-armed Fiendgod had just appeared.

“Is that...?” The black-robed Godking was stunned for a moment...and then he began to laugh. “Ji Ning in a Fiendgod formation? Haha, that’s Ji Ning using his Rahu Formation. Haha! Years ago, he relied on the Rahu Formation to force me to bow my head and accede to his requests. He hasn’t taken part in any of the fights of the past six centuries, because he has been hoping that he would be able to rescue his senior apprentice-sister from my clutches. Now that he’s given up, he’s joining the fray. Right...the Grandmaster has instructed that if we have the chance, we are to get rid of Ji Ning.”

“Mm.” Daomother Devilhand nodded. “The big picture is what truly

matters, but if we have the chance, I'll have the army pay Ji Ning some special attention."

Rumble...

The army of the Seamless Gate soared outwards, flying towards the distant wilderness as well.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

One formation after another began to assemble, and one golem after another began to land, causing the earth to shake. The army of the Seamless Gate was filled with extremely high morale, and in front of them led the ape-shaped Envoy of All Things, its body wreathed with dark-red flames. Behind him were two of the white-haired, red-eyed Infinity Fiendgods.

The grand armies of the Seamless Gate and the Nuwa Alliance faced each other.

The major powers on both sides watched nervously.

This was the first time the Nuwa Alliance had come out to fight after retreating into their citadel all those days ago! To both sides, this was a battle that they could not afford to lose.

"Darknorth, you have to be careful."

"Darknorth, don't fight against those formations head-on."

"Darknorth, those two white-haired, red-eyed Infinity Fiendgods have close to a top-tier Daofather's power. The Envoy of All Things is even more terrifying. No matter what, don't go close to it." The Seven Planets Gods near Ning all sent mental messages to him. Due to him rescuing the two hundred-plus Empyrean Gods, there were many who were now much more friendly towards him than before. Many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals felt gratitude towards Ning for him saving their fellow disciples and lifelong friends.

Ning just nodded. "I won't be rash."

If he was to tell them that he was going to deal with the Envoy of All

Things, it would probably cause a major disturbance. This was a critical battle; it was best for these Empyrean Gods and True Immortals to be able to remain calm.

Rumble...

Suddenly, the entire Nuwa Alliance army began to charge forward.

Under the guidance of Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan, all of them headed towards their respective targets.

“Ji Ning, you are free to act as you see fit.” Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan’s orders came.

Boom.

The Rahu-Ning suddenly moved. He moved with extraordinary speed as he blazed through the vast wilderness, going far past all the surrounding Seven Planets Gods. The body of his Rahu God had the power of a top-tier Daofather, giving him terrifying speed and strength. As he bound forward, he actually became the vanguard of the entire army, charging in front of everyone else and moving far beyond his allies.

“He’s that fast?!” The seven major powers on the city walls were all surprised.

“Eh?!” The black-robed Godking stared in shock as the Rahu-Ning charged straight to the forefront.

Chapter 16: The Number One Sword-Art of the Three Realms

As the black-robed Godking was standing on the city walls, staring as the Rahu-Ning charged forward at the very front of the army of the Nuwa Alliance, Ji Ning also raised his head to stare towards him.

Their gazes collided...and the black-robed Godking's heart clenched momentarily.

"Interesting. He seems to have improved a bit in power." The black-robed Godking laughed coldly. "Unfortunately, hatred seems to have fogged up his mind. Doesn't he know that in a war, you need to rely on the power of your allies? To charge all by yourself towards the enemy is the same as throwing yourself into a deadly trap. Who do you think you are? An Envoy of All Things? Do you really think you can dominate all comers?"

By now, everyone on both armies had noticed that the Rahu-Ning had charged to the very forefront of battle.

"Has he gone mad?"

"That must be Ji Ning, right? In years past, he roamed the Three Realms and slaughtered quite a few Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of our Seamless Gate. How dare he act so brashly on the field of battle as well? Let's surround him and kill him. Dealing with him will be effortless."

"He really is seeking out death."

When the great army of the Seamless Gate saw the Rahu-Ning charge towards them, they all believed that this quite well-known Empyrean God Darknorth had gone mad. Every so often, there were some people who would go absolutely berserk on the battlefield; Empyrean God Silvermoon, for example, had done just the same during the last fight.

"Fellow Daoist Darknorth, you must not advance so hastily!"

"Slow it down."

“Don’t let yourself be surrounded by the enemies!”

The Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Nuwa Alliance who were behind Ning all called out to him in worry...but alas, Ning was far too fast, and there was no way for them to catch up at all.

Whoosh.

Wind howled past his ear, and space itself was rippling before him. Twin swords in hands, the Rahu-Ning bound forward through the desolate wilderness.

“The two of you, go slow him down.”

“Infinity Fiendgod, go and kill Ji Ning.”

Daomother Devilhand almost instantly gave her orders. Ning had charged to the very forefront of the battle, and so Daomother Devilhand could easily arrange for her forces to intercept and kill him.

Boom! Boom!

Instantly, the two closest violet-light golems charged towards Ning, their heavy footsteps causing the ground to tremble. One of the golems bellowed furiously, “Darknorth, you are courting death!”

“Imbeciles.” The Rahu-Ning howled through the air, meeting them in battle.

Sword-light flashed!

Both Darknorth swords struck out simultaneously. Once they did...the faces of the major powers on both sides of the battle completely changed. Daomother Devilhand, the black-robed Godking, Subhuti, Xuan Yuan, Daoist Three Purities, Shennong...the faces of each and every one of them changed. They were all incredibly experienced figures, and they naturally were able to tell at one glance how terrifying Ji Ning’s sword-arts were.

“What a terrifying sword-art.” The black-robed Godking was stunned.

“This sword-art...”

Rumble...

The two streaks of sword-light were like two bolts of endless lightning as they tore through space, carrying an unstoppable amount of force.

The two controllers of the violet-light golems had previously been quite confident, as these golems were as tough as magic treasures and thus perfectly suited to tying down foes. Even if a Daofather attacked, it would be difficult for the Daofather to injure them. These golems had bodies that were just as tough as a body of one who had reached the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art].

But when those two streaks of sword-light lit up...the two True Immortals commanding the golems were completely stunned. Their hearts began to quiver.

“Good heav-”

BOOM! BOOM!

They sought to block, but the two streaks of sword-light landed on their bodies. The two violet-light golems were knocked flying backwards, almost instantly being sent back into the ranks of the Seamless Gate’s armies. But they didn’t stop there; they continued to flip backwards uncontrollably at high speed. Soon, they were far behind the main army.

Utter silence! Deathly stillness!

The entire battlefield instantly ground to halt.

Everyone else was stunned and silenced...but Ning acted as though he had simply kicked away two little pebbles. Showing no emotions at all, he continued to charge towards the Seamless Gate’s army at a terrifying level of speed.

“Not good.” Atop the city walls, Daomother Devilhand had an ugly look on her face. “He is very powerful. Extremely powerful. He’s probably close to a top-tier Daofather in strength! The ‘Life and Death Formations of the Twin Realm Calamity Dragons’ are comparatively weak, defensively speaking. If he’s allowed to charge into the army and into those formations, he’ll probably be able to break through them. As for the Infinity Fiendgod, it’s still some distance away from him.”

She had instructed those two golems to tie down Ning, so as to allow one of the white-haired, red-eyed Infinity Fiendgods enough time to get there.

The Infinity Fiendgods were located at the very center of the entire army, alongside the Envoy of All Things. Thus, they were fairly far away from Ning.

“Seamless Infinity Formation! Hurry up and stop Ji Ning. Tie him down and work with the Infinity Fiendgod to kill him!” Daomother Devilhand immediately gave the order.

“Yes.” The Seamless Infinity Formation nearest Ning immediately flew towards him.

Boom!

The vast, awe-inspiring Seamless Infinity Formation was surrounded by a region of primordial chaos, and a layer of endless black clouds radiated from them as well. They all surged straight towards Ning. The Seamless Infinity Formation would be able to fight against even actual True Gods and Daofathers without fear.

Each Seamless Infinity Formation was formed from 289 Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. It was the ‘king’ of the Seamless Chaosworld who had created this technique, and he did so with the purpose of allowing Empyrean Gods and True Immortals to be able to fight back against True Gods and Daofathers. Its strength lay in trapping powerful foes!

“He really is crazy. He’s actually charging straight for the formation.” Atop the city walls, the black-robed Godking shook his head at what he was seeing.

The vast, awe-inspiring Seamless Infinity Formation came crashing towards Ning. Ning’s six arms now each wielded a sword, and he ran forward like a streak of light, charging straight towards it.

The main army of the Nuwa Alliance was still far behind him, frantically trying to catch up. The main army of the Seamless Gate was watching from afar as well.

Both armies were staring at this sight. They were staring as the Rahu-Ning was about to collide with the Seamless Infinity Formation.

“You wish to block me?” The towering Rahu-Ning watched as the endless black clouds moved closer and closer to him. The outlines of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals within the black cloud could be vaguely seen, and all of them were staring icily towards Ning.

Ning once more struck out with a sword.

Just one strike from a single sword.

The sword was the Chaos-level Darknorth sword.

Whoosh.

It was like a bolt of lightning had suddenly filled Heaven and Earth! No...it was even faster than a lightning bolt! The ‘indestructible’ Seamless Infinity Formation that was ‘perfect for trapping foes’...in the face of this strike, it was like a black air bubble that was instantly pierced straight through and popped! One of the Empyrean Gods struck by the sword-light was instantly disintegrated, and the entire Seamless Infinity Formation completely broke apart.

Boom! The black air bubble completely shattered.

This sword-art was the fastest, most penetrating sword technique Ning had...the Blood Drop stance of the [Brightmoon] sword-art!

“How can this be?!” Empyrean God Tongxun, the leader of the formation, was suffering a complete mental breakdown. “The Seamless Infinity Formation was broken apart with a single sword-strike? T-this is impossible..”

“Good heavens...”

“Save us! Save us!”

“Flee!”

The 288 Empyrean Gods and True Immortals were all mentally shattered by this attack. If even the Seamless Infinity Formation couldn’t withstand that sword...now that the formation was gone, they would be

like easily slaughtered ants. Right now, their greatest regret was the fact that the Rahu-Ning actually had six arms!

Those six arms swept out with a sword in each hand. Sword-light flashed everywhere, massacring them at an incredible speed. The Rahu-Ning slaughtered his way from one end of the formation to the other, and more than 180 Empyrean Gods and True Immortals perished on the spot! The only reason there were any survivors at all was because Ning wasn't trying to wipe them all out...because his attention was fully focused on the white-haired, red-eyed Infinity Fiendgod that was charging towards him.

“Good!”

Atop the city walls, Daofather Subhuti let out an exclamation as he saw that distant, utterly dazzling sword-strike that was far more terrifying than a mere thunderbolt. He was so excited that he actually pounded the stone railings in front of him.

“What a formidable sword-art. What a fast and terrifying sword-art!” Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan's face had completely changed. “A sword that surpasses the limits of the Heavenly Daos. No; that's not all. His sword-art carried a strange vortex with it, making it move even faster and have even more penetrative power. Such a terrifying sword-art actually exists in the three Realms?”

“A fine sword-art.”

“Did he master the [Five Treasures]?”

“That sword-strike alone is proof that Ning has power comparable to that of a top-tier Daofather. He's absolutely capable of being a match for the Envoy of All Things.”

Ever since the battle had begun, the major powers of the Nuwa Alliance had been feeling quite nervous. Now, all of them began to let out surprised exclamations. Perhaps ordinary Empyrean Gods and True Immortals couldn't tell, but they could; Ji Ning's sword-arts hadn't 'simply' surpassed the limits of the Heavenly Daos, they also innately contained profound mysteries that were incomparably exalted. A sword-

art like this could absolutely be described as the number one sword-art of the Three Realms.

“The number one sword-art of the Three Realms.” Suiren’s voice was deep and gravelly, but his eyes contained a look of delight.

“Agreed.”

“This sword-art is indeed the best in the Three Realms.”

The Three Sovereigns all concurred on this. Even Lord Buddha and Daoist Three Purities nodded in agreement.

As for the nearby Daofather Subhuti, when he heard his old friends praise his disciple in such a way, he couldn’t help but reveal a grin.

At the same time, atop the walls of the Seamless Citadel, the black-robed Godking and Daomother Devilhand were just as astonished. When the black-robed Godking saw that dazzling, absolutely terrifying sword-stroke, his heart had instantly sunk. This was going to be trouble!”

“We’re in trouble.” The black-robed Godking began to panic.

Daomother Devilhand’s face was utterly ashen, but she quickly sent a mental message to the Infinity Fiendgod. “Fight him with care and focus on defense. Tie him down. The Envoy will reinforce you right away.”

The white-haired, red-eyed Infinity Fiendgod had close to the power of a top-tier Daofather as well. In the previous battles, two of them combined were able to resist the power of True Immortal Jimin’s Pangu God, which was a testament to their great power.

“Yes, Daomother.”

.....

The six-armed Rahu-Ning and the white-haired, re-eyed Infinity Fiendgod were both in front of their respective armies. They charged towards each other, and as they closed in, the Darknorth sword in Ning’s hand moved.

Slash!

A strange, unfathomable streak of sword-light suddenly flickered.

Swish!

A white-haired head went flying into the air.

This was the most unpredictable, the most unfathomable sword-stance Ning had...the Shadowless stance of the [Brightmoon] sword-art!

Chapter 17: Battling the Envoy of All Things

The white-haired Infinity Fiendgod's head went flying!

The headless body instantly began to break apart, revealing the many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals that had been inside of it in the Infinity Fiendgod Formation. These Empyrean Gods and True Immortals were completely terrified. They didn't even think of fighting back. All of them fled every which way, seeking to move as far as they could from the terrifying Rahu-Ning.

Whooooooooosh. Streaks of sword-light flashed out with the power of a vortex, transforming into six gigantic black holes that devoured all of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.

[Brightmoon] sword-art, Soleheart stance!

This was a stance meant for defense, but Ji Ning was far, far more powerful than his opponents right now. The difference in power was so great the vortexes created by the Soleheart stance had the power to break apart his foes, and so this technique that was meant for continuous defense was actually converted into a tool of slaughter. It was a terrifying killer move, as these ordinary Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, compared to Ning, were simply far too weak. They were all swept into the black holes, and the ablative, swirling power that was meant to weaken enemy attacks were instead used to effortlessly grind them to dust.

"No!"

"How can this be happening?"

"How can he be so strong?!" The Empyrean Gods and True Immortals were gripped by despair. They did their utmost, but remained unable to break free and escape from the terrifying black holes. They were all drawn inside, and all were ground apart and slain.

In but an instant, more than five hundred Empyrean Gods and True Immortals perished! Not one was spared!

This scene caused the face of Daomother Devilhand, who was watching on the walls of the Seamless Citadel, to turn absolutely bone-white. The black-robed Godking's entire body was trembling slightly as well. It must be understood that the sudden appearance of the Envoy of All Things on the field of battle had only caused roughly five hundred casualties amongst the ranks of the Nuwa Alliance.

By comparison, Ji Ning's sudden explosion of power had resulted in the destruction of a Seamless Infinity Formation and an Infinity Fiendgod formation. The number of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals he had slain already exceeded seven hundred.

"How is his sword that bizarre and that powerful?" The black-robed Godking shook his head, unable to accept what he was seeing.

The Shadowless stance had always been the most unpredictable sword-stance Ning had. After spending centuries learning the many terrifying sword-arts left behind by World God Northrest, Ning had distilled their essence and infused it into his own [Brightmoon] sword-art, causing the Shadowless stance to become even more bizarre. If a sword-attack was both unpredictable and ridiculously fast, it would become terrifying to fight against. In fact, if it was sufficiently fast, it could be completely unblockable.

This was what had happened to the Infinity Fiendgod. It had been completely unable to block against this sword-stance! A single blow had severed its head!

"Even I wouldn't be able to block that sword at all." The black-robed Godking's heart was quaking. Previously, Ning had displayed the terrifyingly fast and penetrating Blood Drop stance, but at least it wasn't unpredictable; it was a sword that was straight and aboveboard. The Godking felt that he should at least be able to block it. But the Shadowless stance...even he didn't feel any confidence in being able to block it.

Ji Ning had actually caused him, the exalted, nominal leader of the Seamless Gate...to feel a faint sense of fear?

He truly didn't want to believe this.

"How could he be this powerful? It makes no sense. This simply isn't possible at all." The black-robed Godking shook his head. Prior to this, he had held Ji Ning in no regard at all. How could a single weak Empyrean God have an impact on the overall situation? But now, this Empyrean God had unleashed the power of a top-tier Daofather. "Although Ji Ning's sword-art is formidable, judging from the light surrounding his sword, he should have only reached the fourth stage of swordforce. The reason why Houyi was so formidable was because he, as an Empyrean God, broke through to reach the fifth stage of heartforce. That was why he had such terrifying power."

"Ji Ning's swordforce is only at the fourth stage. It makes no sense for him to be so powerful."

"It makes no sense..."

The black-robed Godking felt a mixture of urgency and anger. No matter what the result of this battle was...the painful losses they had just suffered was enough to cause his heart to feel as though it was being roasted by flames.

The black-robed Godking simply couldn't accept this...but the countless Immortals and Fiendgods of the Nuwa Alliance who saw this all felt their blood boil with excitement. Some of the Seven Planets Gods actually let out excited, heroic roars! The last fight had been a miserable one, but this time Ji Ning showed far, far too much power! In the past, Ji Ning had been able to use the Rahu God to force the Seamless Gate to bow its head, but back then he had barely been at the Daofather level of power. He was probably a bit weaker than even a Seamless Infinity Formation! But now, he was able to slay with a single-sword strike an Infinity Fiendgod that was close to a top-tier Daofather in power.

"Formidable." Xuan Yuan exclaimed with surprise, "Compared to the incredibly fast sword-strike he used at first, the strike he used to slay the Infinity Fiendgod was even more dazzling."

"Strange and unfathomable. The profound mysteries within his sword-

art have already reached the apex. Without question, this is the number-one sword-art of the Three Realms.” Fuxi smiled as he spoke out in praise.

“He truly is formidable.” Lord Tathagata the Buddha revealed a smile as well.

“We can win this war.” Daoist Three Purities was laughing as well.

Only now did the seven major powers all begin to laugh and smile in a joyful way. From Ning using a single sword-strike to slay an Infinity Fiendgod that was close to a top-tier Daofather in power, they were able to tell that he definitely had the power to stalemate the Envoy of All Things. Given how many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals he had slain, their side definitely held the upper hand once more.

“Subhuti, it seems you underestimated your disciple.” Suiren glanced at the nearby Subhuti, who was smiling as well.

“Wonderful. Wonderful. You didn’t let your hatred blind you. Although you were filled with rage and the desire to kill, you were able to remain calm.” Subhuti casually said a few words of praise for his disciple. In truth, he was the happiest of the seven.

“Stop putting on a show of being calm. All I have to do is look at your twitching beard and I can tell how happy you are right now,” Shennong teased.

“What, can’t I be happy?” Subhuti stroked his beard and smiled. “If you have a problem with it, go and produce a similarly talented disciple of your own.”

“Enough with the chit-chat. Look, the Envoy has charged out, and Ning’s charging towards it as well,” Suiren said.

The seven major powers began to watch closely once more.

After Ning had dealt with the Infinity Fiendgod, he had charged straight towards the army of the Seamless Gate.

Whoosh! The Rahu-Ning’s footsteps were simply too fast, causing

Daomother Devilhand, atop the distant city walls of the Seamless Citadel, to begin to worry. Although she was extremely skilled in commanding armies, there was no solution she could use in the face of such an absolutely superiority in speed and power. Even if she had her army immediately flee, there was no way that it would be able to escape from Ji Ning, given how quickly he ran.

As for blocking him? Even the Infinity Fiendgod, which had close to the power of a top-tier Daofather, had been slain in one blow, while the incredibly tough and resilient Seamless Infinity Formation had also been pierced through with one strike. No matter how many reinforcements she sent, they would simply be going to their deaths. Ji Ning was about to reach their army. Once he made it in, it would be an utter slaughter.

“Envoy, stop Ji Ning.” Daomother Devilhand immediately gave the order.

“The rest of the army, begin to withdraw.” Daomother Devilhand gave yet another order.

Although their side had yet to be completely defeated, the situation on the battlefield was quite apparent. Ji Ning was probably strong enough to withstand the Envoy. No matter what, retreating for now was the best option. If they let their army fight without being confident that they would win, it would be akin to sending them into a massacre.

But alas...

Quite a long period of time had passed between Ning’s two clashes, resulting in both armies now being quite close to each other.

“Darknorth!” The Envoy bellowed as it charged straight towards Ning, who moved to intercept.

The first was an ape-shaped Envoy of All Things, wreathed in dark-red flames. It had been invented by an alien Outsider, the Lord of All Things, and Grandmaster Blackheaven had been responsible for forging it.

The second was a Fiendgod that had been created based on the alien Outsider, Rahu, who had been used as the template.

Both of them were filled with unearthly amounts of power. They were evenly matched.

BOOM!

Sword-light flashed in an unpredictable, unfathomable manner, causing the heart of Empyrean God Bloodwave, the controller of the Envoy, to quiver. It was too bizarre and too fast! He hurriedly moved to block. The Envoy of All Things possessed absolutely astonishing power, and if a Daofather was in command of it, it would be able to unleash even greater levels of power. Three to five of them joining together would be a match for an overlord-level Daofather, like the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism. However, the current controller was ‘merely’ Empyrean God Bloodwave, and there was a limit to how strong an Empyrean God could be.

An enormous explosion rang out!

The Envoy stumbled two steps back before steadying itself...and then a hint of a smile appeared on its face.

“I really am a fool. I was scared silly by that terrifying sword-blow of his.” Empyrean God Bloodwave regained his composure. “His sword-arts are the most terrifying sword-arts I have ever seen...but so what? Not even the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism would be able to damage the Envoy in the slightest. Ji Ning can’t hurt me at all. There’s no need for me to even defend against his sword-arts; all I need to do is continuously attack. If I can manage to grab him, I’ll be able to tear that Rahu God body of his apart.”

Whoosh.

The Envoy pounced forward in a savage manner, striking out with twin claws at lightning speed towards Ning.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Sword-light flew everywhere.

Ning’s sword-arts were completely superior to his foe’s techniques.

Sword-arts that surpassed the limits of the Heavenly Daos...there was no way his foe could block his attacks. In an instant, Ning unleashed more than a hundred 'Shadowless' strikes, hacking down repeatedly upon his foe, but he wasn't even able to leave a tiny mark on the golem. Ning actually had to be more careful than before, as his own body was simply formed from the energy of Heaven and Earth. Once it was damaged, it would completely break apart. Fortunately, Ning's sword-arts were at such a high level that he was able to completely block every single strike of the Envoy.

"No wonder the Envoy of All Things had such a fearsome reputation during the war that ended the Primordial Era. If a Daofather was in command, even I probably wouldn't be able to withstand it. Fortunately, the one before me is merely commanded by an Empyrean God," Ning mused to himself.

Chapter 18: Stay Your Hand Immediately!

As Ji Ning exchanged blows with the Envoy, the situation for the Seamless Gate's forces on the battlefield had turned very grim.

In the instant that Ning had slain the Infinity Fiendgod, the military genius Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan had immediately given an order: "Jimin, Wood Child, launch an all-out attack." At the same time, Daomother Devilhand had commanded her troops, "All forces, withdraw!"

Clearly, both of the commanders were able to see how the situation on the battlefield had changed.

"Yes."

"Yes."

The Pangu-Jimin instantly exploded with speed, throwing the rest of the army far, far behind him.

At the same time, next to the Pangu-Jimin yet another Pangu God emerged. This one had a face that was quite young and fresh; it was Wood Child, the commander of the second Pangu Genesis Formation! Clearly, the Seamless Gate's suspicions had been correct; Xuan Yuan and the others had been able to come up with no other ideas at all, and so were planning on compensating by increasing their total forces.

He had been preparing to use two Pangu Gods, having them join forces to fight against the Envoy of All Things. Wood Child was one of the five mighty Children that had once accompanied Mother Nuwa herself. The Pangu God he commanded was currently wielding the 'Godsteel Staff of Aeons', and it ran alongside the Jimin-Pangu at the same level of speed.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

The two Pangu Gods quickly charged into the Seamless Gate's army. They were like tigers let loose amongst a flock of sheep. Most likely, the only thing within the Seamless Gate's army that could match them for speed was the Envoy, with all the other formations and golems, including even the Infinity Fiendgods, being no match for them at all. What's more,

the Seamless Gate's army had been greatly weakened.

Their most powerful asset, the Envoy of All Things, had been tied down by Ji Ning.

There was only one Infinity Fiendgod left! It must be understood that it had previously taken two of them to just barely be a match for a single Pangu God.

Even one of the Seamless Infinity Formations had been destroyed!

These two Pangu Gods could just barely be considered top-tier Daofathers. Naturally, they absolutely dominated and devastated their foes.

"Damn." Daomother Devilhand ground her teeth upon seeing this. She hurriedly deployed golems and formations to try and tie down those two Pangu Gods.

The two Pangu Gods were simply far too powerful. If the many formations and golems on their side joined forces, they'd be able to tie down the Pangu Gods for a time...but as more time passed, the rest of the Nuwa Alliance's army would arrive as well!

"It's all because of that Darknorth." Daomother Devilhand looked at the distant, battling forms of the Envoy and the Rahu-Ning. "He's completely tied down the Envoy."

"What are we to do?!" The black-robed Godking was even more frantic than her. For even Daomother Devilhand, who loved a good fight, to become panicked...the Godking felt as though this entire battlefield was crumbling before him.

"Ji Ning." The black-robed Godking stared at the distant Rahu-Ning. "Ji Ning is the cause of all of this. He's wrecked our battle lines and has even tied down the Envoy."

As Ning fought against the Envoy, there was no one at all from either army who dared to approach the two of them.

Their arena was the most terrifying region in this entire battlefield.

“Mm. The Envoy does have some weaknesses.” As Ning fought, he also kept a careful eye on his opponent, searching for an opening that would allow him to seize victory. “Although the Envoy’s body is quite tough, as it is a golem, the person who commands it...well, that person is merely an Empyrean God and True Immortal. Thus, the attack speed and techniques used are comparatively low-level.”

Ning was a peerless Sword Immortal, after all. He was a master of technique, and his sword-art had been proclaimed by Fuxi, Suiren, and the others as the number one sword-art of the entire Three Realms.

In his eyes, the close-combat techniques being used by the Envoy golem were indeed quite ordinary.

“The weakness of the Envoy lies with the Empyrean God controlling it. If I want to deal with it...I’ll need to put my techniques on full display.”

As their battle continued, multiple battle strategies quickly flashed through Ning’s mind. Any battle would entail using your strengths to attack the enemy’s weaknesses.

Suddenly...

“Ji Ning! Stay your hand immediately!” The black-robed Godking sent mentally to him.

“Godking?” Ning’s gaze turned towards the black-robed Godking standing atop the distant walls of the Seamless Citadel. Their gazes met... and Ning just smiled coldly.

“If you continue like this, I’ll immediately kill your senior apprentice-sister Yu Wei and shatter her soul. In fact, I’ll even destroy her truesoul.” The black-robed Godking’s mental voice was furious. Destroying a truesoul was extremely difficult, but a Daofather was indeed capable of it.

“Eh?” The Envoy battling against Ji Ning could sense that Ji Ning’s killing intent had suddenly skyrocketed for no apparent reason.

“I know that this is a battlefield, and that you are a member of the Nuwa Alliance. There’s no way you can just give up the fight, as those major powers of the Nuwa Alliance would definitely blame you. All I want

you to do is to keep fighting for a while, then reveal an opening and allow the Envoy to injure you, forcing you to ‘unwillingly’ quit the battlefield,” the black-robed Godking sent mentally.

Have Ning reveal an opening?

Intentionally allow the Envoy to wound him?

That was no easy task. If he wasn’t careful, the Rahu Formation might completely crumble..

“Your sword-art vastly surpasses his in technique. You’ll definitely be able to control the degree to which he injures you.” The black-robed Godking sent mentally, “Hurry up. I want you to it right now. I don’t care what method you use, I want you to immediately leave this field of battle. Otherwise, Yu Wei will die immediately! Her soul will be shattered and her truesoul extinguished.”

“You...really are quite shameless.” For the first time, Ning replied to him.

“Shameless? For the sake of achieving victory, I don’t care if I’m forced to act in such a way. I walk the path of the demonheart to begin with. I’m a demon, Ji Ning. Your side already has a huge advantage in this battle because of you, and you’ve already slaughtered enough of our Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. You should be satisfied. So long as you retreat, I’ll immediately return your senior apprentice-sister to you. I absolutely guarantee that I’ll give her to you. But you need to leave this battlefield. Right now!” The black-robed Godking frantically urged him.

Every moment that was being wasted, the two Pangu Gods were massacring more and more members of the Seamless Gate. Although many formations and golems were being used to tie them down, the great army of the Nuwa Alliance was drawing closer and closer. Without the assistance of the Envoy of All Things, their losses would be utterly devastating.”

“Quick. Quick! Quick!!” The Godking was frantic. He watched with nervousness and eagerness from atop the walls of the Seamless Citadel. He was like a terminally ill man who, in his desperation, would consult

with any doctor who claimed to have a cure. He knew that after he had toyed with Ji Ning last time, the chances of Ji Ning trusting him a second time were virtually nil. However...the Godking truly had no other options left to him. In addition, he could sense that Ji Ning truly did have extremely deep feelings for Yu Wei.

Once one's truesoul was extinguished, there would no longer even be a way for one to recover it from the River of Destiny. He believed that Ji Ning absolutely would not be willing to allow Yu Wei's truesoul to be extinguished.

Whoosh.

"He's moving." The black-robed Godking's eyes lit up. The distant Ji Ning had suddenly exploded with power, his six arms wielding six divine swords in a wild, frenetic assault upon the Envoy of All Things.

The Envoy had just a set of two claws, while Ning had six arms. Ning's sword-arts were far too terrifying, and so for a time the Envoy was covered, surrounded, and completely suppressed by countless sword-shadows.

"Why have his attacks only grown more berserk?" At first, the Godking was angered, but he then turned calm, as though he had thought of something.

"This Ji Ning really is clever." The Godking's eyes lit up again. "He's using his six arms to furiously attack, which means his defense is naturally weaker now. No matter how powerful his attacks are, there is no way he can wound the Envoy...but his lowered defense means that there is a chance that the Envoy might wound him. So long as he is wounded, Ji Ning would naturally have an excuse to quit the field of battle. He would be able to excuse his failure to the rest of the Nuwa Alliance as caused by his desire to gain a quick victory, which was why the Envoy had a chance to wound him.

"He really is clever." The black-robed Godking waited eagerly.

"Still...his attacks are a bit too berserk. He's completely suppressed the Envoy. Even the Envoy's attacks are being shut down." The Godking

frowned, then immediately sent another mental message. “Ji Ning, you have to give the Envoy a chance.”

And right at this moment...

A sudden boom could be heard from the Envoy of All Things, which had been completely surrounded and bombarded by those countless sword-shadows. Ning was wielding six Darknorth swords, and the one that had reached the Chaos treasure level had just unleashed a sword-stance that was filled with seemingly infinite power. This could be described as the most fierce and most dominating attack he possessed, and it was the stance that he had origally used to send those two violet-light golems flying far backwards, past the entire army of the Seamless Gate.

[Brightmoon] sword-art, Heavenbreaker stance!

BOOM!!!!

An incomparably savage stroke. The sword smashed down upon the back of the right knee of the Envoy. Its power was like that of the divine axe which Pangu had used to cleave apart Heaven from Earth. A thunderous boom could be heard as the Envoy was knocked off balance and fell to the ground.

To knock down the Envoy was actually extremely difficult, because its two legs were extremely powerful and stable. Even if it was knocked flying, it would be very hard to make it actually fall down onto the ground. Experts at this level of skill all were extremely good at keeping their balance and remaining stable. To cause someone to lose his balance was far, far too hard. The many sword-strikes which Ning had blanketed the Envoy in seemed useless, but in truth they were meant to keep the Envoy off its balance.

By relying on his absolute advantage in technique, he had managed to destabilize the Envoy...and then he had sent the Heavenbreaker stance to smash at the back of the knee. And with a boom! The Envoy had fallen to the ground.

“No!” The Envoy’s controller began to panic...but what greeted his protestation was a fierce, sharp streak of sword-light that smashed away

at the Envoy's twin claws, giving them no chance to resist.

Whooooosh! Four of the six arms of the Rahu-Ning were currently wielding swords. The other two arms were holding onto a rope that glowed with black light. The rope quickly wrapped itself around the Envoy's body. The Envoy had been knocked to the ground and its arms had been completely suppressed by Ning's nonstop attacks. The rope instantly and completely wrapped itself in circles around the Envoy.

Any golem, no matter powerful, would be able to do nothing once it had been completely bound. Although the Envoy roared furiously and tried to struggle, it still wasn't able to break free from the Protocosmic spirit-rope.

Everyone across the entire battlefield turned silent.

Even the two battling Pangu Gods. Even the seven smiling major powers of the Nuwa Alliance. Even the panicking black-robed Godking. Even the ashen-faced Daomother Devilhand. All of them fell silent. All of them were stunned.

They just stared blankly at what had just happened.

The Envoy of All Things...had been tightly bound by a Protocosmic spirit-rope. It was like a zongzi 1 that had fallen to the ground. It was completely unable to break free whatsoever.

The Rahu-Ning raised his head, staring towards the Seamless Citadel. Staring towards the black-robed Godking standing atop the citadel walls.

"Y-you..." The black-robed Godking was dazed.

Daomother Devilhand was rather dazed as well.

All the Immortals and Fiendgods on the entire battlefield were dazed.

Even the seven major powers of the Nuwa Alliance were dazed.

Captured?

The Envoy of All Things...had been captured?

This was an incredibly valuable and precious military asset. If a

Daofather was in command of it, it would instantly possess utterly earth-shaking levels of power. The Seamless Gate had paid an incalculably vast price to create each of the Envoys. The only reason they had even sent one of them to take part in this Realmwar was because this one was an incredibly important one!

Right at this moment...

An azure-skinned gourd suddenly appeared in the Rahu-Ning's hands. The stopper was pulled open.

"Come in."

Ning gently murmured these words...and with a whoosh, the tightly bound Envoy that lay on the ground was transformed to a tiny size, then sucked straight into the mouth of the gourd.

Then...

Ning gently plugged the gourd with the stopper once more.

*

1. This is a type of Chinese sticky rice cake that is usually wrapped up in banana leaves, then tied with string.

Chapter 19: Defeated In Battle

The Allfiend world.

At the peak of a solitary mountain.

The red-robed, azure-haired Lord of All Fiends was seated in the lotus position. He stared through the infinite Void, his gaze focused on the battle that was occurring within the Deerchaser major world.

“Ji Ning?” The Lord of All Fiends murmured softly to himself. For the first time, he paid close attention to this minor figure who he had never cared about before.

“We lost.”

“This critical battle...has been lost. We even lost an Envoy of All Things.” The Lord of All Fiends shook his head.

Suddenly, a figure appeared next to his side. It was Grandmaster Blackheaven, and he had an absolutely frantic look on his face.

“Master,” Blackheaven said frantically, “We have to take the Envoy back! We spend enormous amounts of effort to create them, and now one of them has been stolen! We now have one less, while the Nuwa Alliance has one more. This is going to have a huge impact on the war.”

“Take it back...how?” The Lord of All Fiends stared at Blackheaven.

Blackheaven was stunned.

“There’s no way to take it back. We lost it in battle during a Realmwar... and everyone in the Three Realms is watching this battle. All of the major powers, on our side or in the Nuwa Alliance, are watching this battle. If I make a move, most likely all of the other major powers will make a move as well. There’s no way the Nuwa Alliance will give us any chance whatsoever.” The Lord of All Fiends was quite calm.

“But...but...” Blackheaven was absolutely besides himself.

“If we lost, we lost...and we should admit that they won cleanly.” The Lord of All Fiends shook his head. “During the Primordial Era, the Nuwa

Alliance was able to produce Houyi. Now, it has given birth to Darknorth. This is destiny.”

“Doesn’t the Godking have the soul of Ji Ning’s Dao-companion, Yu Wei? Can’t we use it to trade with Ji Ning for the Envoy?” Blackheaven immediately asked.

“Impossible.” The Lord of All Fiends shook his head. “The ownership of the Envoy is something that has a significant impact on the war as a whole. It isn’t something which Ji Ning can decide on his own. Even if Ji Ning was willing to give it to us, his master Subhuti, Sui ren, Shennong, Daoist Three Purities, and the rest absolutely would not permit it. The loss and gain of an Envoy of All Things is something of enormous impact.”

“Right.” Blackheaven nodded helplessly.

He had to admit it. All personal feelings and emotions would have to be discarded when the stakes impacted one side’s chances of winning the war. There really was no way the Nuwa Alliance would permit Ji Ning to give it up.

“Windfiend...” Suddenly, a dreamy, ghostly voice rang out.

The Lord of All Fiends was startled.

The mist around him began to coalesce, slowly forming into a human-shaped figure that was dressed in a simple gray robe.

“You remain as distant and detached as always.” The gray-robed figure’s voice was insubstantial and ephemeral. “Fighting a war...the key lies in the word ‘fight’. Fight for every scrap of opportunity. Only then will you have a chance to be the final victor.”

The Lord of All Fiends stared at the figure before him...at the king who had once unified the entire Seamless Chaosworld. The one who had been a match for Mother Nuwa in power, and who had only been just one step away from becoming a World God himself.

“Long time no see...Demonheart,” the Lord of All Fiends said softly.

.....

The Deerchaser world.

After Ning took out the gourd and sucked away the Envoy of All Things, the entire battlefield became deathly still. The Seamless Gate's forces no longer had any desire to fight whatsoever!

"We lost." Daomother Devilhand had a look of regret in her eyes.

"How could this have happened? How could...this Ji Ning..." The black-robed Godking ground his teeth. "This was the critical battle...and we actually lost it because of Ji Ning."

The black-robed Godking truly couldn't accept this outcome. He was the one to plan out all the wars, and he was also the titular head of the entire Seamless Gate! Ji Ning was nothing more than a pawn that he had never truly cared about.

"Withdraw."

"Withdraw immediately."

"Don't try to keep fighting."

Daomother Devilhand immediately sent mental orders to all of her forces, ordering the remnants of her army to immediately retreat.

The outcome of this battle had clearly been determined.

The Envoy of All Things had been captured by Ji Ning. Even if Ji Ning no longer participated in this battle, those two Pangu Gods alone, when reinforced by the great army of the Nuwa Alliance, would be powerful enough to utterly decimate the surviving soldiers of the Seamless Gate.

"We lost." The black-robed Godking closed his eyes, murmuring to himself.

Suddenly, he opened his eyes. His eyes were as cold as ice as he stared downwards at the Rahu-Ning...and Ji Ning just so happened to be staring back at him.

"Hmph." The black-robed Godking let out a cold laugh, then waved his

hand, causing a semi-translucent figure appeared within it. It was Yu Wei's soul. The black-robed maiden, Yu Wei, stared at her surroundings in puzzlement.

Ning's body trembled. He stared blankly at the semi-translucent figure atop the walls of the Seamless Citadel. This was the person he had been thinking about, day and night.

"Senior apprentice-sister." The towering, valiant Fiendgod just stood there, murmuring to himself.

Yu Wei saw Ning as well. She opened her mouth to speak towards him, and although no sounds came out, Ning was able to read her lips.

Junior apprentice-brother. Yu Wei was looking at Ning.

"I told you that if you disobeyed me, I would kill her. I told you that I would shatter her soul and extinguish her truesoul." The black-robed Godking clenched his enormous hand around the semi-translucent Yu Wei, and his voice echoed within the heavens. "Didn't you say...that she's already dead, and that you killed her? Haha...then, let me let her truly die."

"No-"

Ning stretched his hand out, as though he was about to say something... but the black-robed Godking tightly clenched his fist. As he did so, the semi-translucent shadow of Yu Wei stared at Ning, her lips moving one final time. Take care of...Brightmoon...

BOOM!

Her soul vanished...and her truesoul flickered with one final gleam of light before it too was disintegrated, melting away into nothingness.

Ning stood there blankly, his hand outstretched.

Pain.

Heart-rending pain instantly filled his entire body. It was as though an endless wave had instantly swallowed him, drowning him within its tide.

His wife.

She was dead. She was truly dead.

“You’ve hidden your daughter quite well. You keep her within the Crescent major world. If she was in any other place, I would’ve killed your daughter as well. Ahaha...it seems that I am destined to forever be the demon that lurks in your heart, the demon that haunts your nightmares. Ahahaha...our war has just begun! Are you truly prepared for it? Your daughter will die in the future as well. She’ll also die...ahahaha...” The black-robed Godking cackled with utter madness.

Ning just stood there, not moving at all.

The army of the Nuwa Alliance pursued their foes, but everyone was also paying attention to Ning. He stood there, surrounded by an aura of power that seemed to fill the entirety of the heavens...and yet, he also seemed to have become a bit fragile and frail.

Atop the walls of the Nuwa Alliance’s citadel.

Subhuti, Shennong, Xuan Yuan, and the rest of the seven major powers all had ugly looks on their faces as they witnessed this. However...there was nothing they could do. Even if they did try to intervene, there was no way for them to rescue Yu Wei, because Yu Wei’s fragile, weak soul had been effortlessly wiped out by the Godking in an instant.

“Ji Ning.” Subhuti turned his head, staring towards the other, black-robed Ning who stood behind him. He said softly, “This is war. On the field of battle, many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, many disciples of True Gods and Daofathers, many family members and loved ones, will perish. And this is just the start. In the future...if our side loses the war, all of us ‘major powers’ will be wiped out, to say nothing of the rest.”

“This is the nature of war.” Xuan Yuan spoke in a consoling voice as well.

There was nothing else they could say.

This truly was the nature of war. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Blood for blood. Neither side would show any mercy or care about their former friendships; they would use any tools they could to weaken their

foes. Ji Ning deeply cared about love, and so to shatter Yu Wei's soul and destroy her true soul was an act that would forever plant a thorn into his heart. It was entirely possible that in the future, the thorn would result in a devastating, breathtaking outcome.

The black-robed Ning just stood there, his eyes bloodshot. Tears flowed down his face from his bloodshot eyes.

"Ahahaha..." The black-robed Ning raised his head and laughed loudly, the tears in his eyes instantly vanishing.

"Ahahaha..." The distant, towering figure of the Rahu-Ning also raised his head to laugh.

His laughter shook the heavens. His laughter caused the earth to tremble.

His laughter caused one's heart to freeze.

Everyone could hear the agony and the frenzied hatred contained within his laughter...the limitless, infinite amount of hate. But the black-robed Godking, standing atop the distant walls of the Seamless Citadel, didn't care at all. He just smiled coldly. "The more you hate, the better. The more you hate, the more it will affect your Dao-heart...and if the effect is strong enough, it'll make it hard for you to make any more breakthroughs."

The laughter continued to ring out...and then it suddenly stopped.

The Rahu-Ning lowered his head. He clenched the swords in his hands, then murmured to himself in a low voice. "Senior apprentice-sister...I'm sorry. Brightmoon...I'll take care of her..."

The Rahu-Ning raised his head to stare at the walls of the Seamless Citadel and the Godking. He murmured to himself, "And that Godking...I'll kill him personally and sacrifice his soul to you..."

Every member of the Nuwa Alliance on the battlefield, especially the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals who were close to Ning and viewed him as a brother, was staring at him with worry. Subhuti was staring at him with worry as well.

The Rahu-Ning's laughter had come to a halt...and then, he moved.

"KILL!!!" A black serpent of lightning suddenly flashed, streaking towards the fleeing army of the Seamless Gate.

The Seamless Gate's forces had been engaged in a tactical retreat, staving off the two Pangu Gods while continuing to flee. And now...a black lightning serpent had suddenly entered their midst.

Whooooosh.

Sword-light flashed.

Blood sprayed.

Immortals and Fiendgods died in countless numbers.

"What?! His Rahu God can also use the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] evasion technique?" The black-robed Godking's face completely changed. To be able to use the Rahu God in performing the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] technique meant that Ji Ning was in complete control of the Rahu God's power, not allowing any of it at all to leak out. This meant that Ji Ning was able to control all of the Rahu God's potential power.

Daomother Devilhand's face changed as well, and she immediately issued a frantic mental order. "Retreat at will!"

Retreat at will.

What this meant was...no need to worry about anything else or about others. Everyone was to flee for their own lives, using any methods and means available to them. There was no need to cooperate, no need to work with others.

There was no way at all that they would be able to sustain an organized retreat in the face of Rahu-Ning, who was massacring them at light-speed with his [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] technique.

Chapter 20: The Curtain Falls

“Flee.”

“Let’s go. Flee, quick!”

“Separate and flee in different directions.”

As Daomother Devilhand gave the order, the entire army of the Seamless Gate completely broke apart into countless individual figures. Even the Infinity God, the Seamless Infinity Formations, and the ‘Life and Death Formations of the Twin Realm Calamity Dragons’ all voluntarily dispersed into their component individuals. The Empyrean Gods and True Immortals drew the other Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals into their personal estate-treasures, then frantically began to flee in every possible direction.

The entire battlefield was filled with countless dense clusters of Immortals and Fiendgods. There were far, far too many fleeing Immortals and Fiendgods, and so the Nuwa Alliance didn’t dare to voluntarily disperse their own formations as well.

“Haha...the damnable Seamless Gate has been utterly terrified. Feiyou, let’s have a little competition and see which of us can kill more Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.”

“Fine, let’s!”

The many Seven Planets Gods charged in every direction, and they slaughtered all who stood before them. As for the distant Myriad Immortals Armageddon Formations, they began to launch a constant stream of long-distance attacks. They originally had been meant to play a supporting role on the battlefield, but when used against Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, they were veritable engines of slaughter.

Every single blow from them had the power of a Daofather, after all!

Boom! Bang! The entire battlefield was filled with the sound of explosions. The army of the Nuwa Alliance began a frenzied massacre, going all out to kill as many as they could. The more they killed today, the

fewer they would face in the future, after all.

And without question, the most terrifying figure on this field of question was the Rahu-Ning, who moved about in the form of a black serpent of lightning.

The Rahu-Ning's sword had expanded to become more than three million meters long. His six massive swords swept outwards in every direction, and every single region he passed through resulted in an utter wipeout of the enemy forces there, causing utter terror to race through the hearts of the Seamless Gate's soldiers.

"Haha, Darknorth, your Dao-companion is sharing the same death-site as us. Worth it!"

"Darknorth, we'll embark on the next step of our journey...and you won't live for much longer either."

The slaughtered Empyrean Gods and True Immortals all cursed furiously as they were slaughtered. The Rahu-Ning, however, just killed them in icy cold silence.

He didn't feel much hatred towards these ordinary Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Seamless Gate. However...this was war, and they were on the wrong side. If he didn't wipe them out, they would wipe out the Nuwa Alliance. There were no other choices for him to choose! If he wanted more people on his side to live, his only option was to kill as many as he could, to massacre as many as possible.

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When the army of the Seamless Gate had completely split apart into its component soldiers, there were so many of them on the battlefield that invariably some of them were able to escape and reach the Seamless Citadel.

Atop the walls of the Seamless Citadel.

The black-robed Godking and Daomother Devilhand both had ugly looks on their faces as they watched a few Empyrean Gods and True Immortals flee into the citadel, the vast majority of the others being

slaughtered in the desolate wilderness.

Disastrous!

This defeat was utterly disastrous!

This was an utter massacre!

When the Envoy had appeared for the first time, its attacks had caused Xuan Yuan to order his army to retreat as well, but it was still an orderly, organized retreat. But this time, the Seamless Gate's entire army had completely collapsed, forcing Daomother Devilhand to issue an order for them to retreat at will.

"It's all because of Ji Ning," Daomother Devilhand said hoarsely.

It was Ji Ning who had instantly shattered the Seamless Infinity Formation, slain an Infinity God, and then captured the Seamless Gate's 'killer weapon', the Envoy of All Things. And then, the Rahu-Ning had actually been able to use the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] technique while in Rahu form. Given the power of this technique, the speed at which he pursued and killed his foes was simply too terrifying.

"Damn." The black-robed Godking's eyes flashed with cold light.

Time seemed to flow as slowly as sand in an hourglass, one grain falling down at a time.

Large numbers of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals were massacred on the battlefield, with only the occasional fleeing straggler making it back into the Seamless Citadel.

Then, finally...the battlefield turned quiet once more.

There were no longer any surviving Empyrean Gods or True Immortals of the Seamless Gate on the battlefield at all.

Below the walls of the Seamless Citadel, the towering, bloodlusted Rahu-Ning stared upwards towards the black-robed Godking. His eyes were filled with a bone-chilling murderous intent. Ji Ning truly wanted to attack the Seamless Citadel and battle the Godking...but he saw that Daomother Devilhand was next to the Godking's side. Daomother

Devilhand was a terrifying figure who had actually been able to battle Mother Nuwa herself for a period of time during the war that ended the Primordial Era. If he truly was to attack, Daomother Devilhand would probably have enough of an excuse to attack and most likely kill him with a single palm blow.

He still didn't have enough power to fight against the most truly supreme figures of the Three Realms yet.

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The forces of the Seamless Citadel were filled with agony and rage...but the Nuwa Alliance's castle was filled with the sound of rejoicing.

The seven major powers atop the walls were all laughing.

"We won." For once, Daoist Three Purities had a broad smile on his face as he stroked his beard.

"When Darknorth said to give him a month, he really did have the power to back up what he said. He wasn't just spouting rubbish." Lord Tathagata the Buddha chortled, "He was actually able to unleash such astounding power through the Rahu Formation. I saw that he was able to command his Rahu God while using the [Ninehorn Lightning Formation]. It seems that he must have mastered all of its power, preventing any of it from leaking outwards."

"Yes." Fuxi nodded, then chuckled curiously. "I really wonder how Ji Ning accomplished it. Perhaps it really does have something to do with Undermoon Lake."

"Undermoon Lake?" Lord Tathagata nodded as well. "After Jueming returned from Undermoon Lake, he's been almost perpetually in secluded, solitary meditation. He rarely comes out, but is so powerful that even I am uncertain of his true strength. Like him, Ji Ning left from Undermoon Lake under his own power. He must have gained some special rewards."

"Most likely."

"Must be it."

The major powers chatted amongst themselves for a time. Undermoon Lake was quite a mysterious place in their heart, and they had once tried everything they could to enter, only to fail.

Because the black-robed Ning was next to them, not too far away, he was able to clearly hear the conversation going on amongst the major powers. In fact, some of the major powers actually sneaked peeks at Ning's face. Clearly, however, Ji Ning was not in the mood to discuss anything. He was finding it extremely difficult to recover from the state of frenzied agony and rage that he had fallen into upon Yu Wei's death.

"Withdraw our troops." Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan gave the order.

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The Seamless Citadel.

"It's over." Daomother Devilhand's face was rather pallid and wan. This was the first time in her life that she had suffered such a disastrous defeat. "More than two thousand Empyrean Gods and True Immortals...in the end, less than two hundred survived."

The black-robed Godking was silent for a long moment. He then couldn't help but ask, "Aunt-master, how could Ji Ning be this powerful? I simply don't understand. Is it possible that he's actually already a Daofather, but has been keeping his aura hidden and thus has been pretending to be an Empyrean God? If he is a Daofather, he shouldn't even be allowed to take part in the war for karmic luck."

"If he's a Daofather, he would have to have already mastered a Heavenly Dao." Daomother Devilhand said softly, "But I saw quite clearly that although Darknorth's sword-arts were incomparably transcendent, perhaps the best in all the Three Realms, that was simply because he has trained in and mastered the [Five Treasures]. His sword can surpass the limits of the Heavenly Daos, and he's reached a wondrous level of technique, which is why he is so powerful. However, I can't find any traces of the Heavenly Daos in his sword-arts."

"His movement techniques, his combat methods...I can find no trace of the mysteries of the Heavenly Daos in them at all."

“In addition...”

“If he truly had gained insight into a Heavenly Dao, then Demonheart definitely would’ve found out. He is part of the Heavenly Daos, after all.” Daomother Devilhand looked towards the Godking. “Demonheart is your master.”

The black-robed Godking was stunned. Slowly, reluctantly, he nodded his head. It was true. If Ji Ning had mastered a Heavenly Dao and caused a resonance with the Heavenly Daos, how could it have escaped the notice of the Lord of the Demonheart?

“Then is it possible that he became a True God?” The black-robed Godking couldn’t help but ask.

Daomother Devilhand frowned as she glanced at the black-robed Godking. “The Rahu Formation uses Immortal energy to control countless Celestial Immortals and Loose Immortals, using their power to summon and control the vast nature energy of Heaven and Earth. Even if he was a True God, if all he had was his powerful divine power, it would be useless in the formation. Not even a True God would be capable of unleashing such power from the Rahu Formation. Don’t you even understand something as basic as this?”

Rebuked, the black-robed Godking lowered his head. He just couldn’t accept this. He really couldn’t.

A pawn that he had held in no regard had ended up ruining their entire plan for the war!

“Then what should we do?” The black-robed Godking said, “The Envoy has been seized. Ji Ning has a true body and a Primaltwin; he can have his true body command the Rahu Formation while having his Primaltwin command the Envoy. If his terrifying sword-arts are paired up with the power of an Envoy, the power of his Primaltwin in the Envoy would probably be comparable to yet another Rahu God.”

The Godking’s guess was wrong.

He didn’t know that in truth. Ji Ning had the Immortal energy of a

Daofather. If he was to use his Daofather-level energy to command an Envoy of All Things and use it to unleash his terrifying sword-arts...he would be able to unleash the full power of the Envoy, a level of power comparable to that of the Envoys under the control of the Lord of All Things all those years ago. Those Envoys were close to the overlord-level, and if three to five of them joined forces, they were absolutely a match for the leaders of Daoism and Buddhism.

Clearly, Ning's energy and sword-arts were all at a high enough level for him to command the Envoy effectively, allowing it to unleash a level of power close to that of the overlord-level Daofathers! His power would vastly outstrip the power of a Rahu God; he would essentially be equal in power to figures like Subhuti and Old Man Yuan.

"A true body and a Primaltwin..." Daomother Devilhand frowned as well. "Troublesome. Very troublesome. Very well...we need to go back and think on how we are going to deal with this new issue. Ask your master and the others to ponder on this as well. What should we do with this Ji Ning?"

Prior to this, the Nuwa Alliance had a headache over the question of how to deal with the Envoy.

Now, it was the Seamless Gate's turn to have a headache, this one over Ji Ning.

"It is now time for us to leave the Deerchaser world," Daomother Devilhand said in a low voice.

This war had been lost. It was time to leave.

Chapter 21: Secret Discussions

They had won.

Critical wars like this would generally continue for many years before ending, but an unexpected variable had appeared in the form of Ji Ning.

In truth, both sides essentially knew what the other had up their sleeves. The Nuwa Alliance knew that their foes had an Envoy of All Things, and so they were still prepared to continue battling against it. At most, they would be at a disadvantage and the war would become difficult to win. However, Ning's sudden appearance out of nowhere had caught the Seamless Gate completely offguard.

His sudden appearance and his explosion of terrifying power had instantly smacked the army of the Seamless Gate senseless. They had completely and irrevocably collapsed, and so the result was that this battle, the most critical battle in the Three Realms in the war for karmic luck, had ended after just a few short months.

.....

The Deerchaser major world. Within the imperial palace.

Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan had hosted a huge celebratory feast, and had invited many major powers and the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals who had fought in the battle to take part. Although Ning took part in the banquet as well, he left very early on.

He was seated within a gazebo.

Flakes of snow drifted about around him. Ning sat there by himself, a flagon of wine and a wineglass in front of him.

He quietly sipped his wine. As it flowed into his throat, it brought a stream of warmth with it.

“Senior apprentice-sister...according to what World God Northrest told me, all things are possible within the endless primordial chaos.” A distant gaze was in Ning's eyes. “Even Vastheaven Palace itself has figures that were far more powerful than World God Northrest. In the primordial

chaos, there are figures that vastly, vastly outstrip World Gods like him in might...”

“The World God stage isn’t the end.”

“Once one reaches the World God stage, one can find a true soul within the River of Destiny.”

“Your true soul has been destroyed. Not even World Gods can save you. But if in the future, I can surpass the World God stage and reach an even higher level, perhaps I will be able to save you.” This was what Ning was quietly saying to himself.

World God Northrest had accepted Ning as his successor. He had thus left behind many techniques, as well as many records on some of the nearby powers and much knowledge regarding the primordial chaos.

This was why Ning knew very well that the most precious item which World God Northrest had, the divine sword ‘Violet Jewel’, was something that was far beyond the capabilities of World Gods and Chaos Immortals to create. Ning knew for a fact that in the primordial chaos, there existed figures more powerful than even World Gods and Chaos Immortals.

Prior to this, Ning didn’t have much ambition; he had felt that being able to survive this tribulation and live a peaceful life afterwards in the Three Realms would be enough. Even though in the future, his lifeblood oath would force him to go search for Vastheaven Palace, that would be something that would only happen in the distant future.

But now...

Ning was filled with ambition.

He wanted to walk further down the path!

“After the war ends, I’ll leave behind my Primaltwin to take care of my daughter, then go do what my lifeblood oath requires me to do. I’ll enter the primordial chaos and search for Vastheaven Palace. I’ll climb up ever-higher mountains and move higher and higher...because so long as the path of Immortal cultivation is truly endless, there will come the day that I will rescue you,” Ning silently promised.

“Junior apprentice-brother.” A voice rang out.

Ning turned his head. Someone had just entered the courtyard. It was senior apprentice-brother Silvermoon.

Silvermoon looked at Ning. He could sense Ning’s hidden loneliness, and he couldn’t help but sigh to himself. When Silvermoon’s Dao-companion had just perished, he had been just as Ning was now. Much time had to pass before he was able to control his emotions and laugh gaily once more....but in truth, he was doing nothing more than suppressing those feelings in his heart. He had never forgotten them, and when the chance to give vent to them had come, he had let them explode forth.

When he looked at Ning, he felt as though he was looking at his past self.

“Senior apprentice-brother,” Ning said.

Silvermoon walked over, then seated himself in front of Ning. He stared at the winecup on the table. “Just one cup?”

“Since you’ve come, there will naturally be one more.” Ning waved his hand, and yet another winecup appeared on the table. Ning picked up the flagon of wine and poured a cup for his senior apprentice-brother.

Gurgle gurgle. Silvermoon tasted the wine, then raised his head and downed it all.

“The wine’s pretty strong.” Silvermoon chuckled. “I came to see you because I was worried that you’d let yourself grow depressed and dispirited, or that you’d be completely consumed by your hatred. But now, it seems, you are quite calm.”

“Of course I’m calm. I still have my daughter, Brightmoon. I also have Uncle White, Little Qing, and the others, along with my mother and father,” Ning said calmly. Although his parents had perished, if he was able to become a World God he would be able to locate their souls in the River of Destiny.

“Yes. There are many things left in the world for us to cherish.” Silvermoon nodded, but his eyes were filled with a murderous look. “But

the Seamless Gate really will stoop to anything. They actually launched assassinations on a massive scale against the family members and loved ones of many Empyrean Gods, True Immortals, and Daofathers. So many have perished!”

“Yes.” Ning couldn’t hide the murderous look in his own eyes either.

When he thought of how the Godking had stood there atop the walls of the Seamless Citadel, crushing the soul of his wife in his fingers and disintegrating her truesoul...Ning’s hatred began to rise.

Ning had to kill him.

He had to kill this ‘Godking’!

.....

The Allfiend world.

At the top of that solitary mountain peak, the Lord of All Fiends was meeting with the Lord of the Demonheart. Blackheaven stood respectfully to one side, not saying a word.

“That was quite a miserable loss,” the gray-robed figure said softly, a hint of amusement in his words. “A pity. A pity.”

“Aren’t you the one who forced this great tribulation upon us?” The Lord of All Fiends said calmly.

“Windfiend, your words are in error. It wasn’t that I forced this tribulation to occur; rather, if I didn’t take action, we would be completely wiped out.” The gray-robed figure chuckled, “Thus, our only choice is to fight. Only if the Nuwa Alliance is completely annihilated shall we be able to survive.”

“Then what is the true source of this calamitous war?” The Lord of All Fiends frowned.

“Even I do not know. I am part of the Heavenly Daos, but they are not all mine.” The gray-robed figure shook his head. “No matter what...I still hope that the Seamless Gate will be the one to win. Although I have become part of the Heavenly Daos...in the past, I was the king of the

Seamless Chaosworld, after all. I truly don't wish to see the Seamless Gate be completely wiped out, or perhaps see you lead a tiny band of survivors in fleeing from the Three Realms. In the end, my hope is simply that the living beings who shall prosper and thrive within the Three Realms shall be the living beings of the Seamless Chaosworld."

The Lord of All Fiends stared at him.

The gray-robed figure continued, "As for the war for karmic luck...the battle for the Deerchaser major world was the critical battle. Unfortunately, we lost. We lost due to a completely unexpected variable. He is neither a Daofather nor a True God, and he hasn't even reached the fifth stage of heartforce or swordforce. However...he was still able to unleash the full, complete power of the Rahu Formation. Now that he has acquired the Envoy, he has become the greatest impediment to our side winning the war for karmic luck."

"He has indeed." The Lord of All Fiends nodded. "Do you have any ideas for dealing with him? Given his power, he can have his true body control the Rahu Formation while his Primaltwin controls the Envoy. Even if I sent four or five Envoys against him, they wouldn't really be able to do anything to him. Don't forget that the army of the Nuwa Alliance is incredibly powerful as well. Without the Envoys, there's no way that we can possibly overcome them."

"Ji Ning has become the sharpest fang of all in the maws of the Nuwa Alliance." The gray-robed figure chuckled calmly. "The best way to deal with such a fang...is to pull it out."

"Pull it out?" The Lord of All Fiends was stunned.

"Yes." The gray-robed figure nodded.

"How?" The Lord of All Fiends' face changed. He could vaguely sense at what Lord Demonheart was proposing.

"Have True Gods and Daofathers act. Attack and kill Ji Ning." This was the gray-robed figure's response.

The Lord of All Fiends instantly frowned. It was exactly as he has

suspected. He immediately said unhappily, "There is reason why neither we nor the Nuwa Alliance have been willing to allow True Gods or Daofathers to get involved and launch the Endwar, and are instead competing to win the war for karmic luck first. That reason is because both of our sides are very close to each other in power. If we really were to launch the Endwar, our casualties would be catastrophic. If we were to have a True God or Daofather strike, the Nuwa Alliance would be enraged and probably send their major powers to intervene. If this happens, it's very possible that the Endwar will immediately begin as a result."

"Perhaps it will. But perhaps it won't." The gray-robed figure said calmly, "With this new variable, Ji Ning, entering into the mix, our chances for winning the war for karmic luck have become very low. If that's the case...we might as well start the Endwar right away."

"What's more..."

"These so-called 'unspoken rules' were meant to be broken. True Gods and Daofathers are forbidden from intervening? When things really come to a head, why care about such foolish rules? The only thing that matters is killing Ji Ning! If the Nuwa Alliance goes crazy, then let's fight! They'll be caught completely unprepared...and given that they are currently winning the war for karmic luck, they probably wouldn't be willing to launch the Endwar just yet."

"Thus, even if we actually kill Ji Ning and cause the Endwar, we would be the side with the upper hand as we would already be prepared for it. If the Endwar doesn't begin? That's even better. In short...no matter what the result is, it won't be that bad for us," the gray-robed figure said calmly.

The Lord of All Fiends seemed to be intrigued by his words.

"But if we just let things develop...we are on track to lose the war for karmic luck for certain," the gray-robed figure said calmly.

The Lord of All Fiends was silent for a long moment.

The gray-robed figure just watched him. He had become part of the Heavenly Daos, after all; the one who truly was in control of the Seamless

Gate and made the decisions for it was now the Lord of All Fiends! To violate the unspoken accords of the major powers and to have True Gods and Daofathers act to assassinate Ji Ning...this was a decision which only the Lord of All Fiends could make.

“True. No matter what the end result is, it won’t be that bad for us. I’ve never wanted to actually see the Endwar descend upon us...but it is no longer avoidable.” The Lord of All Fiends shook his head. “Since that’s the case...then let us anoint our war-banner with Ji Ning’s blood.”

The gray-robed figure laughed.

Chapter 22: A Deadly Crisis

The remnants of the Seamless Gate's army departed from the Deerchaser world, the scene of the Seamless Gate's most catastrophic defeat.

"Eh?"

As they were leading their shattered forces away, their hearts filled with misery, the black-robed Godking and Daomother Devilhand were both stunned.

"The Fiendlord is summoning us?" The Godking was puzzled.

"Why is Windfiend summoning us? He never gets involved in these things." Daomother Devilhand was puzzled as well. Neither of them, however, hesitated at all. They immediately sent their coresense to the Allfiend world, using it to manifest an incarnation that descended upon it.

The Allfiend world. Windfiend Palace. At the very tip of the palace, clouds and mist could be seen swirling about four figures who had gathered here. These four could be considered the true leaders of the Seamless Gate.

They were the Lord of All Fiends, the Keeper of the Everwood, Daomother Devilhand, and the black-robed Godking.

"Uncle-master, why have you summoned all of us here?" The black-robed Godking had the lowest status of the four, and so he spoke in an extremely respectful manner.

Keeper Everwood and Daomother Devilhand looked towards him as well.

The Lord of All Fiends said solemnly, "Just now, Demonheart showed himself. He had a chat with me."

Instantly, everyone's hearts clenched.

Demonheart....

The undisputed king of the Seamless Chaosworld. Everywhere he went,

he brought warfare with him. There were no enemies that could stand against him, and no one could surpass him in his mastery of strategy and in his mastery of the heart. He had led the Seamless Chaosworld in its war against the Pangu Chaosworld, and had inflicted repeated, disastrous defeats upon the Pangu Chaosworld.

But at the critical moment, the alien Outsider known as the Lord of All Things who had been manipulating the conflict behind the scenes made his appearance. Then, Mother Nuwa had suddenly made a breakthrough to become a Pangu-level God as well, allowing her to absolutely dominate all her enemies. Only then did Demonheart suffer such a humiliating defeat. However, no one doubted Demonheart's power.

"He appeared?" Keeper Everwood frowned. "He's already merged himself into the Heavenly Daos. Even if he did appear, it would've been nothing more than a clone that was manifested from the natural energy of Heaven and Earth. He was the one who started the first war. What is he scheming now?" Keeper Everwood was the most peace-loving member of the Seamless Gate. He was extremely unhappy with how Demonheart had caused this new war.

However, the secret whispers of fate had also indicated to him that if they didn't fight, the only result would be utter annihilation. Thus, there was no way for him to oppose it.

"Everwood." The Lord of All Fiends looked towards him. "I know what type of a person you are...but you need to understand that at a time like this, we simply cannot be merciful and soft-hearted. To be merciful to them is the same as being merciless to our brothers, elders, and younglings of the Seamless Chaosworld! Now that things have reached the life-and-death stage, we need to be even more merciless than before!"

Keeper Everwood nodded, his aura becoming a bit more vicious. "Don't worry. When the time comes...I won't show mercy."

"We have already lost the war for the Deerchaser world." The Lord of All Fiends continued, "This was because a major new variable appeared. Ji Ning."

“Ji Ning is clearly just an Empyrean God and True Immortal, but he was able to wield his Rahu Formation to great effect, unleashing a level of power that was comparable to that of a top-tier Daofather’s. In fact, he was able to completely suppress the Envoy of All Things in might. Now that Ji Ning also has the Envoy in his hands...he is like a tiger that has gained wings. If Ji Ning is to appear on any battlefield during the rest of the war for karmic luck, the advantage we have from our Envoys would be completely nullified.”

Everyone present nodded.

“Right. He’s too formidable.” The black-robed Godking couldn’t help but agree.

“We have always left the decision of how to handle Ji Ning up to you.” Daomother Devilhand said coldly, “And now, that young fellow has grown up to become such a dangerous threat. Hmph.”

The black-robed Godking’s face changed slightly, but he forced down the rage he felt in his heart. Daomother Devilhand was the easily agitated sort. In the past, there were times when she wouldn’t even give Demonheart any face, to say nothing of a junior like him.

“I was wrong.” The black-robed Godking lowered his head.

“Enough.” The Lord of All Fiends continued, “In the war for karmic luck, the Nuwa Alliance has its three major formations while we have our Envoys. We’re able to give them a good run for their money. But now that Ji Ning has appeared, and now that we’ve lost the most critical battle...our chances of winning the war for karmic luck are quite slim.”

All of them felt heaviness in their hearts.

“Thus, Demonheart suggested to me...that we should simply go kill Ji Ning,” the Lord of All Fiends said solemnly.

“Go kill him?”

“But...”

“This could very well cause the Endwar.”

All three of the others were shocked.

The Lord of All Fiends said, “At first, I didn’t agree with him either. However, when I thought it over carefully, I realized that Demonheart was right. If we kill Ji Ning, we’ll be able to take back the Envoy. Even if the Endwar begins, we’ll be prepared for it while they won’t be. And of course, if the Nuwa Alliance isn’t willing to start the Endwar, that’ll be even better.”

The Lord of All Fiends swept the other three with his gaze. “To tell the truth, we can all subconsciously sense the enormous danger that hangs over our heads. This danger is the danger of annihilation, and it has made all of us nervous. However, there’s no way to escape the Endwar. Sooner or later, it will come. When it does come, I want the three of you to stay close to me. If the situation turns grim, or if an unexpected variable appears like another alien Outsider, I’ll immediately lead you all in fleeing from the Three Realms. As long as we are able to survive, hope remains.”

“Agreed.” Everyone present nodded.

Before planning for victory, first plan for defeat. With the Lord of All Fiends on their side, the Seamless Gate’s chances of escape would clearly be quite good.

“Make your preparations for the Endwar,” the Lord of All Fiends said. “Although I predict that the chances of the Nuwa Alliance actually launching it are quite low, we still need to prepare for it. Inform that ally of ours as well. As soon as we make our move, his entire army has to move as well.”

“Of course. There’s no way we can let him just sit there and mop up the survivors,” Keeper Everwood said calmly.

“Agreed.” They all nodded.

“Our strike against Ji Ning has to be successful,” the Lord of All Fiends said. “The Nuwa Alliance has just won a great victory, and their army is currently celebrating. Ji Ning is currently within Xuan Yuan’s imperial palace. If we are going to attack, let’s attack Xuan Yuan’s palace and slay

Ji Ning on the spot.”

“Attack him inside the imperial palace?”

“Aren’t we going to wait for Ji Ning to come out? If he comes out by himself, things will be much easier for us.”

“Windfiend is correct. Right now, the Nuwa Alliance is probably feeling fairly confident and relaxed, as Ji Ning is inside the imperial palace. But once he leaves, it’s possible that Daofather Subhuti will travel alongside him. Even if we were to attack, Subhuti would be able to instantly protect Ji Ning or collect him into a treasure, giving us no chance to attack at all.” Keeper Everwood agreed with the Lord of All Fiends.

The Lord of All Fiends nodded. “Although the palace is a dangerous place, at least he is by himself. When we make our move, there won’t be enough time for Subhuti and Xuan Yuan to intervene. But of course, striking within the palace will be quite difficult, as Xuan Yuan’s surrounded his home with many formations.” As he spoke, he turned to look at Keeper Everwood.

“Everwood, you have many tricks up your sleeve. You should be able to temporarily tie down the Three Sovereigns by yourself for a short period of time, so you have to be involved in this. Help us tie down the major powers of the Nuwa Alliance,” the Lord of All Fiends instructed.

Keeper Everwood nodded and sighed. “Don’t worry. I’ve sparred against those old friends of mine countless times. Even if all three of them come against me at the same time, I’ll be able to hold them off for a short period of time.”

“We’ll also have to invite Darklight and Shadowless,” the Lord of All Fiends said.

The supreme figures of the Seamless Gate began to make their plans against Ji Ning, carefully plotting his death in detail.

They even came up with two contingency plans. If the first plan failed, they would use the contingency plan. If the contingency plan failed, they’d use the second contingency plan. In short, they were determined to

make this mission a success. They also had to take back the Envoy of All Things! However, slaying Ji Ning was the most important part of this mission, with taking back the Envoy being a secondary goal.

The Nuwa Alliance, however, knew nothing of the Seamless Gate's secret plotting. This was because very few members of the Seamless Gate were involved in it; less than fifteen in total! The vast majority of the major powers of the Seamless Gate were kept in the dark, with only their most supreme leaders and some of the most loyal, top-tier Daofathers knowing that they were to make their preparations for the Endwar. Each of these figures had multiple Daofathers under their command; once the Endwar actually began, they would be able to give the order and ensure that all of the major powers of the Seamless Gate would respond in an orderly fashion.

So long as the major powers weren't caught off-guard, the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals under them wouldn't be caught off-guard either.

The imperial palace of the Deerchaser world.

Ji Ning's residence.

The white-robed Ning was seated silently in the lotus position, training in the [Solitary World God] technique. If he was able to break through and become a True God prior to the Endwar erupting, he would become much more powerful than he was now. The [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] technique and the [One True Body] technique had given him the power of a half-step True God already. If he was able to make a true breakthrough, he would be equivalent to a half-step Elder God.

Still, he was very far away from becoming a Daofather of the Great Firmament, because he had to first master a Heavenly Dao. In contrast, it was possible for one to become a True God after mastering one of the Grand Daos.

However, it was merely 'possible'; more than eighty percent of Empyrean Gods had mastered a Grand Dao, but how many of them were able to become True Gods?

Ji Ning had already mastered a Grand Dao as well! The Grand Dao of Lightning!

When he had left Undermoon Lake, Ning had quickly mastered the Dao of Rainwater and the Dao of the Thunderclap. During the month that he had spent training in the [Icefire Jindan Smelting] technique, he had silently and soundlessly mastered the Grand Dao of Lightning! Surprisingly, it was actually the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop, which he had once mastered in the past, which remained incomplete. He would most likely need another ten days or so to re-master it.

His foundation was simply far too profound. His sword-arts were at such a high level that he was able to understand these Daos at an absolutely astonishing level of speed.

Chapter 23: Binding the Envoy of All Things

After he had mastered the [Five Treasures] sword-art, comprehending other Daos became a much faster process. However, if a major power was to train the [Five Treasures] but be unable to master it and instead be trapped at a bottleneck while being unable to master any other Daos... that would be utterly disastrous. The only reason why Ji Ning was willing to risk it was because he hadn't possessed that high a level of attainment in other Daos to begin with.

Within Ning's estate-treasure.

The black-robed Ji Ning waved his hand and a gourd appeared by his side. Staring at the gourd, Ning said to himself in a soft voice, "It's time to bind the Envoy."

Pop. He pulled the stopper out of the gourd, then pulled out the flame-wreathed, ape-shaped Envoy of All Things. It collapsed to the ground, still bound up by that Protocosmic spirit-rope.

The Envoy opened its eyes, glaring angrily at Ning. "You captured me... but you can forget about getting the Envoy."

"Is that so?" The black-robed Ning replied coldly.

"So what if you have me all tied up? You have no way of coming in." The Envoy growled, "Nor can you deal any damage at all to this golem. Forget about you; even the most powerful figures of the Three Realms wouldn't be able to damage it!"

Ning shook his head. "I simply can forcibly bind the Envoy, right?"

"Forcibly bind it? A Daofather, maybe. You?" The Envoy's controller snorted angrily. "Come and try!"

In truth, the Envoy was essentially a magic treasure, and the owner of this magic treasure was Empyrean God Bloodwave, located in the heart of it! Bloodwave believed that since Ji Ning was also just an Empyrean

God/True Immortal, their divine power and Immortal energy should be on the same level. There was no way Ji Ning would be able to bind the Envoy by force, because he would be constantly using his own energy to resist and counter Ji Ning's binding efforts.

"Let's try and see." The black-robed Ning waved a finger. Instantly, a torrid flood of energy flowed into the Envoy. As soon as this happened, Ning could instantly sense the control which Bloodwave had over the Envoy. Bloodwave was already the master of the Envoy, and so he had the advantage of incumbency. There was no way that someone on a similar level of power to Bloodwave could possibly seize the golem from under his control. However...Daofather-level energy was clearly vastly beyond the ability of Bloodwave to counteract, and it began to seep into the golem.

Crackle, crackle, crackle. The energy continued to flow into the golem, taking over more and more parts of it.

"How can this be?" Bloodwave was stunned. "How could this Immortal energy be this powerful? How could..." He could clearly sense how powerful and pure the invading energy was. It was vastly beyond the Pure Yang True Immortal level.

"Y-y-you've become a Daofather?" Bloodwave didn't dare believe it. "Impossible. If you became a Daofather, you would've had to first master a Heavenly Dao. If that had happened, there would've been no way to hide it at all."

Ning just chuckled calmly.

Indeed, there was no way to hide gaining mastery over a Heavenly Dao. The resonance effect this would create with the Heavenly Daos would instantly be discovered by the Lord of the Demonheart, who was himself a part of the Heavenly Daos. However, Ning was 'only' a True Immortal who had a Jindan that was comparable to a first-tier Jindan. If his Jindan had actually been a real first-tier Jindan, then when he used the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] and [One True Body] techniques, he would've become even more powerful than actual first-tier True Immortals.

Alas, the only way to gain such a Jindan was to manifest it during the Celestial Tribulation.

“Impossible. You must be a Daofather. How could you have become a Daofather?” Bloodwave simply couldn’t understand it, no matter how hard he tried. Suddenly, he thought of the fact that not even the major powers on his side knew that Ji Ning had become a Daofather. This definitely had to be an important secret.

Rumble...

Suddenly, a surge of coresense burst forth from the Envoy’s body, charging outwards and seeking to escape the estate-treasure.

“You wish to reveal my secret?” Ning laughed calmly. “Don’t even try it. There’s no way your coresense can make it out of this estate-treasure.”

Not even the coresenses of Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals would be able to penetrate and scan this estate-treasure, to say nothing of Empyrean God Bloodwave’s coresense. So long as Ning did not permit it, there was no way his coresense would be able to escape to the outside world.

Ning wasn’t worried about Bloodwave revealing his secret.

Empyrean God Bloodwave...didn’t have a Primaltwin! And if did have incarnations in the outside world, it wouldn’t matter.

What was an ‘incarnation’? Even Void-level Fiendgods were capable of transforming a plucked bit of hair or a single drop of blood into an incarnation. At the Daofather level, incarnations could be manifested with but a thought. However, incarnations were only capable of surviving so long as the true body was alive. In fact, for Void-level Fiendgods, incarnations had to stay within a certain distance of the true body, as they would otherwise automatically dissipate.

Even Daofathers had to maintain a continuous connection to their incarnations to maintain them. This was because it was this hidden connection to and support from the true body that gave the incarnation a mind, a will, and the ability to speak and chat with others.

It must be understood that when one lost a large part of one's soul, roughly seventy or eighty percent, the surviving portion would eventually crumble apart and die. If the loss was even more significant, one could die on the spot. The incarnation of a Daofather didn't have any part of the Daofather's soul within it at all. Why, then, was it able to 'live'? Precisely because it relied on the true body for its survival.

And now, Bloodwave was trapped within the estate-world. This estate-world treasure was one which Ning had specially chosen out of the many estate-world treasures he had acquired from the prisoners of Pangaea. It was the most mysterious of all estate-worlds, capable of refusing even the senses of Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals. It was capable of severing all contact between its insides and the outside world!

Once the connection was severed, any incarnations that Bloodwave might've had in the outside world would dissipated due to its inability to connect to the true body.

No matter how angry and resentful Bloodwave was, all he could do was stare as Ning continued the binding process. And after spending roughly an hour, Ning finally succeeded.

"Come out." This was the only thing Ning commanded.

Whoosh.

Bloodwave was forcibly teleported out. Eyes completely bloodshot, he charged towards Ji Ning in a berserk manner.

"Hmph." The black-robed Ning's gaze turned cold. The Thirty-Six Heavens instantly appeared around him in the form of flags, and they linked together to instantly and complete surround Bloodwave. Slash! Slash! Slash! Bloodwave cried out miserably and furiously as he was ground to death.

The difference between a Daofather and an Empyrean God was simply far too great. Unless there was some incredibly special circumstances involved, it would be extremely hard to overcome such a vast gulf in power.

“The Envoy of All Things.” The black-robed Ning first willed the Thirty-Six Heavens to disappear, and then he blinked inside of the ‘body’ of the Envoy.

“What a marvelous, intricate golem.” As Ning entered, he continued to explore the Envoy with his senses. Even he, the controller, was not capable of discovering a way to damage the golem in the slightest.

“Fortunately, this golem is in perfect shape.” Ning secretly rejoiced to himself.

During the war that ended the Primordial Era, the Lord of All Things had commanded an entire host of Envoys. When he had died, the critical mechanisms inside the Envoys had actually initiated self-destruct sequences. Although Mother Nuwa had defeated him and won his Envoys, they were in reality nothing more than completely useless, shattered bits of metal.

What Ning didn’t understand was that the Envoys which the Lord of All Things used were completely different from the Envoys which Grandmaster Blackheaven had created.

The Lord of All Things had used cruel, brutal methods to capture souls of Daofathers, then smelt them into the Envoys, ensuring that every single Envoy was absolutely loyal to him. An unwaveringly loyal army was what the Lord of All Things required, and as soon as he died his loyal Envoys self-destructed, ensuring that their enemies would never have a chance to acquire them. Grandmaster Blackheaven certainly didn’t have the ability to capture a Daofather’s soul or smelt it into an Envoy; all he was able to do was have a living Daofather command it.

“What a powerful golem...and is this part here the core? These five chaos jewels?” Ning discovered the energy source of the Envoy.

Empyrean Gods were able to use the Envoy to unleash the power of a top-tier Daofather. The energy source of an Envoy, however, was of course not the Empyrean God himself. Its power came from these five chaos jewels, which each contained unique attributes stemming from the elements of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. Joined together, they were

able to unleash absolutely shocking amounts of power. There was simply no way for an Empyrean God to completely control such power. A Daofather, however, would be able to do so, and a Daofather in control would result in the Envoy having even more power.

“I feel powerful, even more powerful than when I am in control of a Rahu God. No wonder it is capable of unleashing a level of power close to that of the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism.” Ning was truly stunned. Mostly likely, ten of his Rahu Gods would be needed to match up with this Envoy.

The difference in power between a Empyrean God controlling it and a Daofather controlling it was simply enormous.

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The enormous imperial palace. Ji Ning’s residence.

“Brother Darknorth.”

“Only now did I have a chance to meet with you, Darknorth. I’m quite embarrassed.” Empyrean God Owldragon and a host of other Empyrean Gods and True Immortals had come to visit.

The white-robed Ning received them with a smile on his face. He could sense the gratitude, respect, and excitement these visiting Empyrean Gods and True Immortals felt. All of them understood that Ning had been the greatest contributor to their victory in the battle for the Deerchaser world! The greatest hero of them all! In addition, given the power which Ning had put on display today, he would definitely be able to unleash utterly astonishing levels of power during the upcoming final battles in the war for karmic luck.

Ji Ning’s formidableness meant that their side would have a better chance of winning.

Of course these Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would feel excited and grateful!

“They’ve entrusted me with their hopes...but in truth, it doesn’t change anything. Seamless Gate...no matter what, I will use all my strength to

fight against it.” After sending these Empyrean Gods and True Immortals away, Ning walked by himself along the railing, staring at the endless, starry skies. “And the Godking.”

“I’m definitely going to kill him.”

Chapter 24: Killing Ji Ning

The distant Allfiend world.

“Everything needs to be carried out according to the plan.” The Lord of All Fiends sat by himself at the peak of the mountain, staring into the endless Void. His voice passed through the Void, reaching the minds of the major powers spread throughout the other worlds. “In this mission to kill Ji Ning and take back the Envoy, as long as we move quickly enough we should be able to succeed fairly easily. However, there is a chance that the Endwar will begin as a result. Everyone, make your preparations.”

“Yes, Fiendlord.”

“Don’t worry, Windfiend.”

“We’ve all made our preparations.”

The ten-plus most powerful figures of the entire Seamless Gate all understood that this night was likely to be the most important night they had experienced in countless eons. This was a night where the major powers of both alliances would battle, a night which could well cause the Endwar to erupt. The last Endwar had caused the destruction of two chaosworlds; from this, one could tell how devastating a battle between major powers could be.

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“So we are about to fight soon...” A violet-robed woman was seated in the lotus position atop a jade bed. Her arms were sparkling white and crystalline, while a faint hint of eagerness could be seen within her eyes.

Of the supreme powers of the Seamless Gate, she was the one who loved battle the most.

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“We absolutely cannot afford to lose this battle.” A man dressed in similar violet robes who had a wooden ruler on his back was seated within an ordinary wooden room. He waved his hand, and the wooden ruler on his back fell into his grasp. The Keeper of the Everwood gently

stroked the wooden ruler with his hand as he stared at it. He said in a soft voice, "Old friend, we are going to go into battle together once more. The last time we fought together was during the war that ended the Primordial Era."

Thrum...the wooden ruler vibrated slightly.

Keeper Everwood's face turned solemn and his eyes turned cold. Although he disliked battle, when the time came for them to fight he absolutely would not show mercy.

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"The Fiendlord is a bit too cautious. He prepared a total of three plans for us, and we're attacking from ambush. There's no way Ji Ning will even be able to assemble the Rahu Formation in time. Killing him will be as easy as killing a chicken. The primary plan is more than enough. In fact, there's no need for us to even involve Shadowless in this. I by myself am more than enough."

An icy look flashed through the eyes of this skinny old man who had a hideous, centipede-like scar across his face. This man was Swordfather Darklight.

He had reached the fifth stage of swordforce, and he could be considered the Seamless Gate's number one expert in the art of assassinations. His sword was known as the Darklight Sword, and it was named that because enemies were unable to see his sword.

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The first plan the Seamless Gate initiated only involved a tiny number of major powers. It was kept extraordinarily secret, and so no one in the Nuwa Alliance noticed anything at all.

The Deerchaser world. The imperial palace.

The white-robed Ning was seated facing Silvermoon. Both were staring at the countless stars in the skies.

"Peaceful days are the best." Silvermoon stared at the starry skies, then

said softly, "But I wonder how long this peace will last."

"Once the war is over, everything will be right again." Ning stared at the stars as well. "The tree wishes to be still, but the wind continues to blow. Although we wish to live peaceful lives, there's a reason for this war. Only when we sever the hand that is manipulating things behind the scenes and slay the major powers who are focused on causing trouble and chaos throughout the Three Realms will peace return."

"Haha." Silvermoon chuckled. "Fortunately, we have you on our side. I really wonder what you experienced in Undermoon Lake, junior apprentice-brother. You are merely an Empyrean God, but you are able to unleash such incredible levels of power."

Ning smiled but didn't reply.

Everyone who had emerged from Undermoon Lake, including all of the two hundred-plus Empyrean Gods, had been completely silent about their experiences there. Everyone including Silvermoon knew that it wasn't that they were unwilling to speak, it had to be that they were unable to speak, and so no one tried to force the story out of them.

"Eh? We've finished the wine." Silvermoon lifted up the canteen, giving it a few shakes before laughing and rising to his feet. "Alright. Now that the wine's all gone, it's time for me to leave. No need to send me off." As he spoke, he took a step forward and flew downwards, then lazily sauntered off into the distance. As he left, he called out in a loud voice, "Just make sure you help me kill a few more of those Seamless Gate bastards."

"No problem," Ning called back.

In the previous battle, Silvermoon's capabilities had been tremendously degraded. He had lost more than half of his soul, resulting in him now being extremely weak. There was no way he could take part in battle at all. In truth, Ning could've let him quickly recover his soul by giving him just a tiny bit of chaos nectar, but Ning knew that given Silvermoon's temperament, he would immediately choose to rejoin the war once more upon being healed.

It was best to let him stay in the back safely for now.

“And these Nine Chaos Seals are truly unspeakably marvelous.” Ning waved his hand, producing one of the Goldstar Beads of the Heavens. The more insight he gained into the Nine Chaos Seals which each goldstar bead contained, the more marvelous he felt them to be. Meditating on them allowed Ning to more easily understand and master the sword-arts left behind by World God Northrest, and it even made it a bit easier for him to comprehend the Dao.

Ning had originally thought them to be fairly ordinary chaos seals that had been found in the primordial chaos, but after learning the many techniques transmitted to him by World God Northrest, Ning felt all the more convinced of how extraordinary these Nine Chaos Seals were.

“Perhaps in the future, when I find Vastheaven Palace in the primordial chaos, I’ll be able to learn the history behind the creation of the Nine Chaos Seals.”

He continued to hold the goldstar beads in his hands, meditating on them.

After spending two hours in meditation, it was now very late at night.

“Eh?” Ning suddenly, inexplicably felt his heartrate quicken, and a shiver flashed through his soul. In fact, his subconscious was now screaming that an utterly terrifying danger was descending upon him, so unfathomably vast and deadly that Ning’s heart was naturally filled with an aura of despair.

“Not good.” Ning was shocked. Ever since he had mastered the second of the Nine Chaos Seals and became capable of transforming the goldstar beads in the Mirrors of the Heavens, Ning’s subconscious connection to the whispers of fate had become much stronger than before. But this time, things had happened without any warning whatsoever. Only when the danger had already descended upon him did the warning come, filling him with utter terror. Clearly, his foe’s mastery over fate and destiny was far superior to Ning’s, allowing him to even muffle the whispers of fate, which was why Ning didn’t sense anything until the very end.

And by now...it was too late.

“Flee.” Faced with such danger, Ning’s only thought was of flight.

Suddenly...

Rumble...

Like a peacock spreading his tail feathers, streaks of black light instantly swished towards Ning in a fan-like manner.

They were completely silent but incredibly fast.

By the time Ning noticed the fan-shaped streaks of black light, they had already reached him. The only thing that Ning could do was use the [Starseizing Hand] to block.

Whooooooooosh. The fan-shaped streaks of black light instantly and completely penetrated through Ning’s body. Although Ning’s body was protected by the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], it was still unable to defend against the black streaks of light. The [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] was completely shattered, and even his divine body was unable to withstand this attack. The golden pellet Jindan in his body, along with his soul, wasn’t able to withstand it either...and both were instantly annihilated.

The white-robed youth that had been sitting there was instantly reduced to nothingness.

“Hmph. So what if he is powerful? So what if he has the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent]? So what if he has the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]?” A skinny old man appeared in the air above the palace. It was Swordfather Darklight of the Seamless Gate.

This mission was extremely critical, and Ning possessed the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] evasion technique. If he was given any time to escape, he would definitely be able to do so. Thus, the Seamless Gate had invited their most skilled assassin, Swordfather Darklight, to engage. His sword was both secretive enough and powerful enough to instantly wipe out Ji Ning!

If Swordfather Darklight had failed, allowing Ji Ning to flee with his

[Ninehorn Lightning Serpent], then the next to strike would be the Lord of All Fiends, who had the most terrifyingly fast movement technique in all of the Three Realms. The Lord of All Fiends would personally strike! His evasion technique was far superior to Ji Ning's; not even the Golden Crow 'King of Monsters' of the ancient days could match up to the Lord of All Fiends in speed.

However...

Ning had been too relaxed and unguarded here in the imperial palace of Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan. He had placed too much faith in Subhuti and Xuan Yuan, and had too much confidence in himself. And so...he had instantly been killed. He didn't even have the chance to use the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] to escape, and so there was no need for the Lord of All Fiends to intervene.

Two powerful aura instantly burst forth from within the imperial palace.

“DARKLIGHT!!!”

An enraged roar instantly shook the entire world. This white-bearded, robed old man normally always had a calm, merry smile on his face...but now, he was filled with a towering desire to kill. His senses were quite acute and quite quick, but by the time he sensed what was happening, Ji Ning's true body had already been slain, completely unable to fight back whatsoever.

“Subhuti, don't be hasty.” A second, calm voice rang out within the imperial palace.

A violet-robed man appeared in the air above the imperial palace. He held a wooden ruler in his hands, and he pointed it at the distant Patriarch Subhuti. Instantly, a blurry violet light instantly sprang up to surround Patriarch Subhuti. Even the stunned and enraged Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan was completely surrounded by the blurry violet light. Upon being trapped by it, Patriarch Subhuti and Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan actually found that they were temporarily unable to break free from it.

“Shatter!” Patriarch Subhuti waved his finger. Whoosh...the spacetime around him began to splinter apart.

“It’s useless.” The violet-robed figure stood there calmly in the air. Although spacetime around him was shattering apart in layers, the boundless violet light was able to once more forcibly recompress and seal those layers together. In terms of pure defensive capabilities, Keeper Everwood was the most formidable individual in the Seamless Gate. Even if all three of the Three Sovereigns came, he would still be able to hold them off by himself, much less a mere Subhuti and Xuan Yuan.

Chapter 25: The Summoning Call

Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan was utterly besides himself with rage. This was his imperial palace. The Seamless Gate dared to launch a frontal attack against it? As soon as he found out that he was unable to immediately break through the barrier of violet light, he manifested a divine sword that glowed with dazzling golden light. This was the legendary Xuanyuan sword! As the sword struck out, the entire imperial palace began to glow with countless formations. The natural energy of Heaven and Earth began to furiously gather here, causing the skies to turn dark.

“Everwood...f*ck off!” Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan exploded forth with an utterly astonishing aura. Seemingly limitless amounts of power were being concentrated within the Xuanyuan sword in his hands, and he delivered a downwards chop!

Rumble...

The violet light parted before the blow like the waves of the sea...but then it came together to trap and crush the sword-light, repeatedly grinding away at it. If you strike at water with a blade, the water will continue to flow. Although the sword-light was able to temporarily split the violet light apart, more of the violet light would come forth and merge together anew.

“Xuan Yuan, although you are formidable in commanding armies, in a true one-on-one fight, you are still far from being a match for me,” Keeper Everwood said calmly. His gaze was actually focused on the distant form of Subhuti...because he would sense that Daofather Subhuti was transforming.

“You’ve hidden yourself away for countless years. Subhuti...I’m quite curious to see how strong you are.” Keeper Everwood’s voice rang out next by Subhuti’s ears.

Subhuti was incredibly mysterious. Even during the war that ended the Primordial Era, he had only intervened a few times to save people. He

hadn't truly taken part in the war. He possessed the most formidable fleeing abilities within the Nuwa Alliance, and he was absolutely, unswervingly loyal to them. Why was it that such a steadfast major power had refused to take part in the war? The Seamless Gate's guess... was that Subhuti was most likely meant to be the escape path for the Nuwa Alliance!

If the Pangu Chaosworld had lost the war and was in true danger of annihilation, Subhuti probably would've intervened to lead them all away.

The Lord of All Fiends was the escape path for the Seamless Gate.

Subhuti was quite likely to be the escape path for the Nuwa Alliance.

Thus, the major powers of the Seamless Gate had never dared to underestimate Subhuti. No one knew exactly how strong he was.

"Ji Ning...is my disciple." Subhuti's beard fluttered in the wind, his entire body emanating a heart-stopping aura of might. His ancient hands suddenly increased explosively in size, becoming like two massive stormclouds as he clawed forward with them.

Whap! Whap! Whap! Whap!

Even before his heaven-covering palms actually struck the dense violet light, the violet light began to split apart. The palms wildly smashed downwards towards Keeper Everwood, and the closer they moved towards him, the more powerfully the violet light resisted. However, Subhuti's hands were completely covered with dark black light, and they were incomparably sharp. They tore through all obstacles as they grabbed towards the midair Keeper Everwood.

"I knew that you'd be able to break through this protective light of mine." Keeper Everwood's unearthly aura of violet light was nothing more than a divine protective light that surrounded him. Xuan Yuan had used his full power, but had still been unable to break through the barrier of light. In terms of defense, Keeper Everwood was the undisputed number one expert of the Seamless Gate, after all. Most likely, on the side of the Nuwa Alliance, only Lord Tathagata the Buddha could compare with him in terms of defensive strength.

Lord Buddha focused on a few exquisite skills. Keeper Everwood, by contrast, dabbled a bit in everything. He was skilled in almost everything! In formations, he was probably close to being a match for even Fuxi. In close combat, he was top-notch. In golem-making and pill-forging, he was quite the expert as well. Although he wasn't the best in the Three Realms, he was definitely in the top three! This made Keeper Everwood extremely difficult to deal with.

"Careful, Subhuti." Keeper Everwood stretched out the wooden ruler in his hand and pointed.

Whoosh. The wooden ruler instantly expanded to become thirty thousand meters long, and it smashed downwards towards the pair of massive, heaven-covering hands.

Rumble....Heaven and Earth both began to tremble.

"You live up to the stories. Show me all of your power, Subhuti." Keeper Everwood looked towards Subhuti.

"The Seamless Gate has truly used its full power to try and kill my disciple." Subhuti was frantic. He had immediately used one of his killer attacks, but was still unable to do anything to his foes.

"Suiren!"

"Tathagata!"

"Three Purities!"

"Hurry up and come here!" Subhuti's will covered the entire Three Realms as he urged them to make haste.

.....

Within the distant Mount Innerheart of the Crescent major world.

Snooooore. Snooooore. Snooooore. A skinny old man was snoring contentedly as he slept, a fan placed against his chest.

"Crazy Ji, hurry up and come to the Deerchaser world to save your junior apprentice-brother!"

A voice suddenly echoed within the old man's mind.

The skinny elder was stunned. "The Deerchaser world is the base of Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan. Master is there as well...but he's actually been forced to call for reinforcements?" Crazy Ji no longer looked as relaxed as he normally did. His face was now solemn, and a spatial whirlpool appeared in front of him. Crazy Ji took a single step forward, entering the spatial whirlpool.

.....

On other side of Mount Innerheart.

"Whew! Down you go."

A woodcutter, dressed in cloth robes and straw shoes, was striking with his hatchet against a large tree, slowly hacking away at it.

"Woodcutter, your junior apprentice-brother is in danger at the Deerchaser major world. The Seamless Gate has attacked, and even I cannot stop them. You can decide for yourself whether or not you wish to come." Subhuti's voice rang out in the woodcutter's mind.

Whooooosh. A large spatial whirlpool appeared before the woodcutter as well.

The woodcutter no longer seemed as laid back as he normally was. Instead, he hefted his hatchet over his shoulders, staring calmly at the spatial whirlpool tunnel before him. He was the most low-key figure of all of Mount Innerheart. In fact, he remained at the base of the mountain, never going to meet with Subhuti. However, he was indisputably the most powerful disciple of Mount Innerheart.

No one knew what his story was. In fact, no one even knew his real name. The only thing Ning and the others knew...was that their senior brother was known as the 'woodcutter'.

"Should I go or not? Ji Ning, that little kid who learned archery from me all those years ago?" The woodcutter hefted his hatchet, a hint of amusement playing at the corners of his lips. "They want to kill my junior apprentice-brother...but they haven't asked me if that's acceptable."

Whoosh. Hatchet over his shoulders, the woodcutter stepped into the spatial whirlpool tunnel.

.....

The major world of Flower-Fruit Mountain.

Flower-Fruit Mountain was an awe-inspiringly famous place back during the Primordial Era. Surprisingly, in the Three Realms era it had become quite a low-key locale. However, the leader of the monsters of Flower-Fruit Mountain was a legendary figure.

He was born from a divine stone which Mother Nuwa had used to repair the heavens, and he emerged from it filled with endless battle-lust!

He battled against Heaven and battled against Earth. He was born to do battle!

Subhuti had taught him, while the Buddhists had tempered him. This truly changed him. Once, a single displeasing word could cause this absolutely savage king to lift up his staff and deliver a ferocious beatdown, but now he had become very low-key. Every day, he spent his time on Flower-Fruit Mountain with his minions, happily eating Immortal peaches and drinking fine wine. When he wanted to sleep, he would use the natural world as his bed and fall asleep on the spot.

He was like a piece of jade that had originally been filled with imperfections but had now been perfectly carved and polished, revealing all of its glorious luster.

“Wukong, your junior apprentice-brother has encountered grave danger in the Deerchaser world. The Seamless Gate seeks to kill him, and I, your master, am unable to withstand them,” Subhuti sent to him.

“Master.”

The hairy monkey had previously been slouched casually upon a rock, watching as a pair of ants battled. When Subhuti’s voice rang out in his mind, he was momentarily startled.

“They want to kill my junior apprentice-brother?” The hairy monkey

rose to his feet, his entire body instantly becoming covered with a dazzling, sparkling golden armor. A long staff appeared in his hands as well.

“Kiddos, your king is going to make a short trip.” His voice echoed in the air above Flower-Fruit Mountain. As for the monkey king himself, he had already pierced through the Void to move towards the Deerchaser world.

Subhuti had instantly summoned the various major powers of the Nuwa Alliance. The Daofathers of Mount Innerheart rarely joined forces, but this time Subhuti summoned all of them.

.....

The imperial palace of the Deerchaser world.

As Subhuti and Xuan Yuan battled against Keeper Everwood, Ji Ning's Primaltwin suddenly appeared.

“Eh?” Swordfather Darklight landed on the ground. As he did, he suddenly saw that a black lightning serpent suddenly flew from the slain true body of Ji Ning into a large seal.

“An estate-world treasure?” Swordfather Darklight instantly recognized what that large seal was. Right at this moment, a figure suddenly emerged from the large seal. It was the ape-shaped Envoy of All Things, its entire body blazing with dark red flames. The Envoy's face, however, had changed. It now had Ji Ning's face, and Ji Ning's eyes were filled with murder as he stared at the skinny old man.

“I was overconfident.”

“I was overconfident, and I trusted too much in Master and the others. I forgot that my situation is no longer the same as it was before. In the past, when I was by Master's side, he could completely shield me from all dangers, blocking out the wind and the rain. There was no need for me to worry about anything. However, I now have the power of a elite Daofather, and when I control the Envoy I'm actually even more powerful. I'm probably very close to even Master I power. At a time like this, anyone capable of posing a threat to me is someone that not even Master would

necessarily be able to save me from.” Ning had become completely clear-minded now.

“You’ve actually managed to bind the Envoy already? Quite fast. Hmph.” Swordfather Darklight laughed coldly, “A pity that it’s useless.”

Swordfather Darklight stood there in the distance, staring towards Ning.

Bang!

Suddenly, that mysterious, unfathomable streak of black light once more appeared. If last time, the black light was in the shape of a fan and possessed incomparably dominating power that completely tore Ning’s divine body apart, this time the black light was like an unending flow of water. It was extremely gentle as it swept towards Ning, seeking to swirl around him and bind him. So long as it could bind him, then it would be able to capture him, much like how Ning himself had bound and captured the Envoy of All Things.

“Presumptuous.” Ning’s Envoy wielded a pair of divine swords in its hands, and its right hand suddenly moved.

Whoosh!

Sword-light lit up.

Ning was using his Daofather-level energy to control the strength of the Envoy of All Things. He used its terrifying, tremendous power to unleash his fastest sword-strike. Sword-light lit up, and it was as though a bolt of lightning had appeared in the black skies! His sword struck even faster than thunder, and the powerful, penetrative force of this blow pierced straight into the flowing, watery-like stream of black sword-light.

Clangclangclangclang...

An extremely fast series of consecutive clanging sounds could be heard with over a thousand sounds ringing out in an instant.

Countless thin sword-shaped streams of light had appeared in the skies.

Swordfather Darklight’s sword-light was formed from countless finger-

sized swords, each of which was covered with a flowing layer of black light. The countless slender swords, in the face of Ning's single dazzling sword-strike, were actually blasted apart by the force of the collision.

This sword-stance was the Blood Drop stance of the [Brightmoon] sword-art!

"How can this be?!" Swordfather Darklight was shocked. Even amongst elite Daofathers, he was ranked quite highly. He probably wasn't much weaker than Patriarch Subhuti. As he saw it, an Empyrean God in command of the Envoy could perhaps just barely be a match for an ordinary elite Daofather. Ji Ning should be no match for him at all.

But in reality...he was actually at a disadvantage in this fight!

"He's actually suppressed me." Swordfather Darklight was shocked. However, he knew how important this mission was and so he didn't waste any time marveling at what had just happened. He immediately sent a mental shout, "Shadowless, hurry up and attack! Are you just going to watch as Ji Ning escapes?"

Chapter 26: No Harming My Junior Apprentice-Brother!

As soon as the black-robed Ji Ning had attacked through his Envoy, he had immediately suppressed Darklight. The power he had just displayed stunned everyone. This definitely wasn't the power of an ordinary elite Daofather; it was a level of power that was extremely close to that of the Three Sovereigns or the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism. As for Daofather Shadowless? He was hidden in the shadows, but had no time to think about this question.

"We have to get rid of him." Daofather Shadowless launched his attack.

"Eh?" As the Envoy-Ning struck out with his sword, suppressing Swordfather Darklight, he immediately saw a pitch-black figure appear in front of him. This pitch-black figure instantly split apart into six figures, each of who wielded a bladed whip that could be used like a flexible sword.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

The six black figures lashed out with their whips, filling the skies with them and completely sealing off the area around Ning. They were like vipers, coiling around Ning and prepared to strike at any moment.

"Daofather Shadowless." Ning could immediately guess at who this was. "The Seamless Gate really thinks quite highly of me. They actually sent their two best assassins to deal with me. The first was Swordfather Darklight, who is skilled in long-distance attacks; the second is Daofather Shadowless, who is skilled in close-range attacks. When the two of them join forces, there aren't many in the Three Realms who can escape them."

Daofather Shadowless was a dual refiner, both a Daofather and a True God. He was far more powerful than Daoist Threelives had been, and was a terrifying figure who was every bit a match for the likes of Subhuti and Old Man Yuan.

There were many differences between Swordfather Darklight and

Daofather Shadowless. Swordfather Darklight used long-range treasures to attack, allowing him to deliver an instant, death-dealing sword-stroke that was able to unleash explosive power. However, in sustained battle, he was a bit weaker.

Daofather Shadowless, however, was a master of close combat! He trained in an extremely bizarre divine ability that was known as the [Shadowless Fiend Sutra]. Only a few of the absolute most elite major powers of the Seamless Gate knew this technique, but the only one who had been able to truly master it was Daofather Shadowless! This divine ability was similar to the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods], but of course there were differences between them.

When one used this divine ability, one would be able to instantly manifest six mighty clones! Each of the six clones would have the same level of power as the original body, and they were like shadows. There was no way to kill a shadow! When Daofather Shadowless activated this technique, the six clones created would all look like mere shadows, with just one of them containing his true body within it!

However, distinguishing the true body from the five false ones was incredibly difficult, and Daofather Shadowless was also able to easily alternate amongst his six mighty clones.

This divine ability allowed his power to increase dramatically, and also made him virtually unkillable! Given that Daofather Shadowless had the power of a elite Daofather to begin with, after he had mastered this technique he had naturally become comparable to Subhuti and Old Man Yuan.

“Break, break, break!” Ji Ning was a peerless Sword Immortal, and his Envoy lashed out with a pair of divine swords with frenzied abandon.

Even though Daofather Shadowless was occasionally struck, each time it turned out that it was only one of his ‘shadows’ that was hit. Daofather Shadowless continued to strike with his frenzied whip-blocks, forcing Ning to keep an extremely tight defense. If Ning made the slightest of mistakes, the whips would most likely be able to wrap themselves around

him.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Riiiiip!

The Envoy-Ning battled against Daofather Shadowless in close combat, the two furious exchanging blows.

One was completely invulnerable to weapons and reputed to be the number one sword-user of the Three Realms.

The other had six indestructible bodies that could attack simultaneously, and also had the long-distance support of Swordfather Darklight. The two could be said to make a perfect pairing.

Ning had been completely shut down.

“What should I do? My attacks are useless against Daofather Shadowless, but his whip strikes have completely tied me down here, restricting my movements. And that damnable Swordfather Darklight...he keeps on interfering with me as well. There’s nothing I can do; my only choice is to try to buy time. The more time passes, the more major powers of the Nuwa Alliance will get here,” Ning mused to himself.

Although all this took time to describe, these major powers actually exchanged blows lightning-fast against each other.

Moments after Ning’s true body had been ambushed and assassinated, his Primaltwin had emerged with the Envoy of All Things and launched an attack, resulting in Swordfather Darklight and Daofather Shadowless joining forces.

“Right at this moment...”

“EVERWOOD!!” An enraged roar rang out.

A towering figure clad in just a fur loincloth had appeared in the skies, and the space around him had been completely torn apart. Utterly terrifying waves of flames were swirling around him, emanating an utterly horrifying aura of power. But if one was able to stare deep into the flames...one would unconsciously feel warmth in the heart, as though

hope could be seen living within the flames.

This was Suiren's 'Eternal Kindlefire'.

"It's Suiren." Ji Ning, battered by Swordfather Darklight and Daofather Shadowless, instantly felt hope in his heart.

"Suiren's come." Yellow Emperor Xuan Yuan was overjoyed as well.

Suiren was secretly acknowledged by many as the number one expert of the Nuwa Alliance. But of course, it was also possible that Lord Tathagata the Buddha and Daoist Three Purities had made breakthroughs in recent years which allowed them to surpass him! Still, for now at least, the level of power that Suiren had made public was enough to let him stand at the very peak of the Three Realms.

The mid-air Suiren was wielding a long black staff in his hands. He brandished the stave, unleashing an aura of endless power that struck out like a falling star, smashing through all impediments. The violet light was instantly shattered.

"Just in time." Keeper Everwood struck out with his wooden ruler as well.

Both weapons had transformed to become three million meters long.

Wooden staff against wooden ruler. The two collided, and the heavens themselves trembled.

Keeper Everwood was knocked two steps backwards. He had to twirl the wooden ruler in an arc before him in order to deflect the remainder of the shockwave.

"I'm still a bit weaker than you in close combat." Keeper Everwood laughed softly, but his eyes were as cold as ice. "Alas for you, there's no need for me to actually fight you."

"Transform."

Keeper Everwood's body blurred as he used [Three Heads, Six Arms]. Each of his six arms now wielded a wooden ruler.

"Everwood. I really don't want to kill you." A sigh suddenly rang out in

the heavens as a enormous, dazzling, shining golden palm suddenly ripped through the skies, smashing downwards.

“Tathagata.” Two of Keeper Everwood’s hands increased in size as well, and he sent his massive palms and wooden rulers to block against this attack.

Almost as soon as Subhuti had called out to them, Suiren, Tathagata, and Daoist Three Purities had arrived.

Suiren’s wooden staff was as heavy as the Solar Star or the Lunar Star, and each blow from it knocked Keeper Everwood stumbling backwards.

Tathagata’s palm contained an entire vast major world inside of it, and those two hands had long ago reached the level of Chaos treasures.

Daoist Three Purities’ ‘Immortal Slaying Sword Formation’ was the most offensively terrifying attack of them all, and Keeper Everwood spent nearly half of his efforts on defending against it.

“A pity that Shennong and Fuxi are both within the primordial chaos. It will take them time to get here.” Subhuti was frantic. “If it was the Lord of All Fiends or Daomother Devilhand attacking, there’s no way they could possibly tie down Three Purities, Tathagata, and Suiren at the same time. Only Everwood is capable of such a deed.”

Subhuti’s heart was burning with anxiety. His power primarily lay in his escaping techniques. Although he was close to the overlord-level in close combat, he was still considerably weaker than the likes of Three Purities, Tathagata, and the others.

As for Keeper Everwood, he was an utter freak. He knew far too many techniques, and when he put them all on display he was able to simultaneously tie down Three Purities, Tathagata, and Suiren for a brief period of time. The very sight of such a feat was terrifying!

“Devilhand, go ahead and strike. Remember, keep the strike surgical. If we can avoid starting the Endwar, we need to try and do so,” the Lord of All Fiends instructed mentally.

“You should’ve let me attack long ago.”

A violet-robed woman appeared in the air above the imperial palace.

She was adorably short and slender, with beautiful features, but the strength of her killing intent was enough to cause the entire Deerchaser world itself to shudder. Dark stormclouds began to gather, and when Subhuti, Daoist Three Purities, and Tathagata saw the violet-robed woman, their faces all changed.

A true fiend amongst fiends! A true mass-murdering maniac! A devil that had caused even the Seamless Chaosworld to tremble in terror!

Daomother Devilhand!

“I didn’t expect that even when Shadowless and Darklight joined forces together, they still wouldn’t be able to do anything to Ji Ning. I have no choice but to let Devilhand to engage as well. I hope that she won’t expand the scope of things too much.” The Lord of All Fiends felt some worry in his heart. Ji Ning, when in command of the Envoy of All Things, truly was much more powerful than they had expected. They had to send out their overlord-level experts, as otherwise it would be extremely difficult to capture him.

The Lord of All Fiends had no choice. He had to send out Daomother Devilhand.

As soon as the violet-robed woman had appeared, she stretched out her slender, ivory-white arms. Her palms sliced through the air, clawing towards the Envoy-Ning, who was still engaged in a furious battle against Swordfather Darklight and Daofather Shadowless.

As for Subhuti, Xuan Yuan, Three Purities, Suiren, and Tathagata? For now, they had all been completely tied down by Keeper Everwood alone! Although this was incredibly difficult and taxing for Keeper Everwood, he was able to endure them for now. Lord Tathagata the Buddha was able to rely on the formidable power of his golden body to endure a hit while striking solemnly towards Daomother Devilhand, but she just used one of her own palms to defend while sending the second clawing towards Ji Ning.

“NO HARMIN’ MY JUNIOR APPRENTICE-BROTHER!”

Heaven and Earth suddenly echoed with this furious bellow, and a murderous aura that was just as savage as Devilhand's soared towards the skies. A monkey-shaped figure had appeared on the distant horizons, and he delivered a furious, double-handed blow with the staff in his hands. The enormous staff, glowing with dazzling golden light, smashed downwards like a thunderbolt from the heavens towards Daomother Devilhand.

Chapter 27: Eldest Disciple

“Unruly monkey!” Daomother Devilhand glanced sideways at him. She didn’t hold the King of Flower-Fruit Mountain in any regard, but she still halted her assault on Ji Ning and instead waved her hand towards the Monkey King, intending to deal with him first.

Daomother Devilhand stood there in midair, one palm clashing with the oncoming blow from Lord Tathagata the Buddha, the other smashing towards the Monkey King.

THUD!

A deep, dull sound rang out. It was the sound of the gleaming golden staff colliding with Daomother Devilhand’s ivory-white hand. Daomother Devilhand’s hand actually came to a halt. It was actually forced to a halt by that staff!

“Eh?” Daomother Devilhand’s face changed as she stared at the distant Monkey King.

“My junior apprentice-brother has only trained for a few short centuries, but he’s reached an incredible level of power. It’s been countless years since the war that ended the Primordial Era. Did you think that I, ol’ Sun, wouldn’t have made some improvements of my own?” The Monkey King sped through the air, closing in on her with his staff in his hands, filled with an unearthly aura of battle.

“The monkey has reached such a level of power as well...our Seamless Gate has been hiding some of our forces, and now it seems the Nuwa Alliance has hidden quite a few of theirs as well.” The Lord of All Fiends secretly sighed to himself.

The war that ended the Primordial Era had occurred far, far too many years ago, after all. It had been more than half a chaos cycle.

After so many years, it was entirely possible that a formerly ordinary True God or Daofather could suddenly reveal the power of a elite Daofather, or perhaps even an overlord-class Daofather. Both sides would

only reveal their final trump cards in the final instant, at the critical moment which would determine victory or defeat, life or death. Trump cards that were left hidden were the most dangerous cards of all.

During the Endwar, a single slip-up or a single unexpected power-up by a major power could have a huge impact on the outcome of the war. Thus, both sides were hiding their true power. Even when they were forced to fight, they would only reveal the powers that the other side already knew about.

“Back then, although the monkey was favored by Nuwa, he was still merely a elite Daofather. But now, he’s close to being an overlord-class Daofather,” the Lord of All Fiends mused to himself.

Sun Wukong, the King of Flower-Fruit Mountain. The shadow of Mother Nuwa could be seen behind him on his path to power.

He had been born from the only piece of stone that Mother Nuwa had used to repair the heavens. How could she possibly not pay attention to him?

He won his treasures from the Dragon Palace, apprenticed himself to Subhuti, was tempered by the Buddhist Sangha, and in the end was provided with the personal tutelage of Mother Nuwa herself. It could be said that Mother Nuwa focused more on training this monkey than she had on anyone else. During the war that ended the Primordial Era, the Seamless Gate had been quite wary of this monkey, as they were afraid that he might possess a terrifying amount of power. However, the reality was that although the monkey was extremely skilled in battle and had many magical treasures on him, he was fairly weak with regards to his insights into the Dao, and so was just barely at the level of elite Daofathers in strength.

Now, half a chaos cycle had gone past. The Monkey King had truly transformed, and this was one of the reasons why Subhuti had summoned him.

Subhuti had summoned three of his main disciples. The eldest disciple, the woodcutter; the second disciple, Crazy Ji; the sixth disciple, Sun

Wukong. In truth, Subhuti actually had another Daofather under his command; his twelfth disciple. However, his twelfth disciple was merely an ordinary Daofather who wasn't strong enough to get involved in battles at this level, and so Subhuti did not summon him.

"This monkey is quite hard to deal with." Daomother Devilhand immediately gnashed her teeth after their initial clash. "Before Nuwa left the Three Realms, she definitely provided this monkey with some assistance."

Although Devilhand was skilled in battle, she was different from Everwood; Keeper Everwood was able to simultaneously tie down multiple overlord-class experts thanks to his defensive prowess, while her skills revolved around attacks! If she spent enough time and effort, she'd be able to wipe out the monkey, but time was a rare and limited commodity right now. The more time passed, the more major powers would make it to this place.

Their target for this mission was Ji Ning!

Although the monkey was formidable, he had long ago become a True God and Daofather; there was no way he could get involved in the war for karmic luck. Ji Ning was clearly just an Empyrean God and True Immortal, but he was able to unleash an utterly unearthly level of power. Now that he had an Envoy of All Things, he was actually able to unleash a level of power that was close to that of an overlord-class Daofather. A monster like this...no matter what, they could not permit him to live.

"Darklight, Shadowless, stop this monkey for me. Leave Ji Ning to me." Daomother Devilhand instantly sent mental instructions to the other two. She didn't want to allow the monkey to be able to distract her.

"Alright." Swordfather Darklight had been airborne this entire time. With but a thought, he caused the black, sword-shaped stream of light under his control to switch directions, striking towards the Monkey King that was charging towards them from afar. The Monkey King had no choice but to use his power to defend against the sword-light. No one would dare to be overconfident when faced with Swordfather Darklight's

sword.

Swish. Daofather Shadowless quickly withdrew as well, turning to charge towards the distant Monkey King.

“Ji Ning. Die.” Daomother Devilhand was still using one hand to clash against Lord Tathagata. With her other, she struck out from hundreds of thousands of kilometers away towards Ning.

“Daomother Devilhand.” Ning felt breathless upon seeing this palm crash down towards him.

If he was in the Rahu Formation, he would probably be instantly annihilated. However, using the Envoy made him much more powerful; more than ten Rahu Formations would be needed to match its power.

“Soleheart stance.” Ning’s twin swords simultaneously unleashed his most powerful supreme defensive technique. A pair of sword-light black holes appeared before Ning. When the terrifying, ivory-white palm lashed out towards him, it was blocked by the black holes. Daomother Devilhand could clearly sense that her hand was being repelled by multiple layers of strange energy that were furiously ablating the power of her strike.

“Eh?” Daomother Devilhand frowned. “Leafseizer.”

Her ivory-white hand suddenly changed, unleashing an even more intricate and terrifying palm-art. Her forefinger, middle finger, and thumb drew close to each other, as though she was holding a leaf between them.

Whap!

The five fingers of her palm danced their way into Ning’s sword-light black holes. And then, following a series of exploding sounds, the black hole vanished, with the fingers latching onto Ning’s Darknorth swords.

“Impossible.” Ning stared in disbelief, his heart filled with shock and dread. Daomother Devilhand’s seizing technique had been simply too dazzling and beautiful. It was a technique that was so complicated as to cause one to feel almost uncontrollably intoxicated upon seeing it. In fact, the technique was even more complicated than Ning’s sword-arts, which was why it had been able to break through it.

Perhaps Ji Ning was the number one expert of the sword in the Three Realms...but in palm-arts, Daomother Devilhand was number one. Even Lord Tathagata, who also specialized in palm arts, was slightly weaker than her.

Whoosh.

Daomother Devilhand's dainty white hands went through multiple different variations; the 'Leafseizer' stance, the 'Flowerpicker' stance, the 'Wilted' stance, and more. These stances all had graceful, refined names, and Daomother Devilhand's movements were quite beautiful as well. However, the power of these techniques caused Ning to feel despair. He was wielding a pair of swords, but one of them had already been seized. Twelve stances later, the Envoy-Ning was struck on the waist by the palm, causing him to uncontrollably fall down to the ground.

"Come in." Daomother Devilhand suddenly produced a Protocosmic spirit-rope in her hands, and she quickly tossed it around the Envoy of All Things.

Trapped inside the Envoy, Ning just felt a sense of powerlessness and reluctance. Although he had already fought as hard as he could, he was still a bit weaker than Daomother Devilhand, a fiend amongst fiends who had once battled Mother Nuwa to a standstill for a short time during the war that ended the Primordial Era. She had only been using one hand, but had been able to capture him after just ten or so stances.

"If I was able to reach the fifth stage of swordforce, my sword-arts would become even more intricate. Combined with my weapon speed surpassing the limits of the Heavenly Daos...perhaps in that situation, Daomother Devilhand wouldn't be able to capture me," Ning sighed to himself.

For the sake of seizing Ning as quickly as possible, Daomother Devilhand had showed no mercy whatsoever. She had unleashed more than ten absolutely dazzling palm-arts with her hand, causing all of the major powers present to feel shocked. "Daomother Devilhand's techniques truly have become even more exquisite since the Primordial

Era.”

Ji Ning had been captured.

Although he was unwilling to accept this, there was nothing he could say. He had been simply too careless, and he was simply not strong enough. Fortunately, he had kept clones outside; even if he died here today, he would have the chance to return to his full level of power in the future. Alas, his Ninehorn Lightning Serpent, Darknorth swords, and other treasures would be lost.

“Daomother Devilhand, please release my junior apprentice-brother.” A chuckling voice rang out as a skinny old man dressed in tattered clothes emerged from a spatial whirlpool. He stretched out his hand, and it glittered with golden light. This was the [Golden Body] technique of the Buddhists, and his shining golden hand struck out towards Daomother Devilhand, seeking to stop her.

“You think to stop me, you crazy monk?” Daomother Devilhand stretched out her own massive hand, many hundreds of thousands of meters in length, and seized the Envoy of All Things, completely ignoring Crazy Ji’s attack.

Clank!

Her ivory-white hand and Crazy Ji’s golden hand, which looked as skinny as a chicken claw, collided against each other.

Crazy Ji’s face changed while Daomother Devilhand revealed a disparaging smile. However, right at this moment, Daomother Devilhand’s face changed as well, becoming ugly to behold. She stared in disbelief at the figure that had just appeared in midair. From that very same spatial vortex, a woodcutter who wore straw shoes and carried a hatchet over his shoulders had appeared. He had come here at the same time as Crazy Ji.

Crazy Ji had been the first to strike, but he had failed.

Only then did the woodcutter brandish his hatchet, and as soon as he did so, Daomother Devilhand’s face turned terrible to behold.

“No!” Daomother Devilhand actually voluntarily released Ji Ning, sending her ivory-white hand upwards to block the hatchet with full force.

“Let it be severed.” The woodcutter spoke in a calm, soft voice.

Swish.

His hatchet seemed extremely ordinary, but Daomother Devilhand’s incomparably marvelous palm-arts were actually unable to block it. The hatchet swished past her defenses, landing on her arm. Slash! Daomother Devilhand’s arm was immediately severed.

Whoosh. After chopping through Devilhand’s ivory-white arm, it suddenly accelerated past the speed of light and chopped towards Swordfather Darklight, who had been controlling his magic treasures to attack from afar.

“Flee.” Swordfather Darklight had no idea that this disaster would suddenly descend upon him from out of nowhere. Although he had noticed the woodcutter appear, he had been quite confident in Daomother Devilhand’s power. He hadn’t expected that a single blow from the hatchet would sever her arm while still carrying enough power to continue to chop towards him. As for the speed of the hatchet...it was even more terrifying than Ning’s sword.

He wanted to flee. But...how could he possibly escape that terrifying hatchet?

Slash. Swordfather Darklight’s body was immediately bisected by the hatchet. His soul and his Jindan were both annihilated, and the two halves of his corpse fell down from the skies, landing on the ground and splattering blood everywhere.

A Daofather who had reached the fifth stage of swordforce and who was skilled in assassinations..had died, just like that.

The entire battlefield had turned silent.

Daoist Three Purities, Lord Tathagata, and Suiren had come to a halt as well. Keeper Everwood had also come to a halt.

Everyone's gaze was turned towards the hatchet-wielding woodcutter. The woodcutter looked very ordinary, and he was dressed very plainly and simply...but just now, that 'ordinary' hatchet had delivered a blow that had stunned all of the overlord-class major powers present.

Long, long ago, there had been another figure who had similarly stunned them with his attacks.

It was Houyi with his arrows!

And today, this woodcutter had stunned them with his hatchet.

"Junior apprentice-brother." Crazy Ji was rescuing the Envoy of All Things.

Daomother Devilhand retracted her treasures, her arm once more growing out and healing. She stared intently at the woodcutter, completely ignoring Ji Ning. She did not even think about trying to capture him again.

"Houyi. Is that you?" Daomother Devilhand's voice was crisp and pleasing to the ear.

"It's me." The woodcutter's reply was very calm.

The entire imperial palace had turned deathly silent. After a long period of silence...

Boom! Boom! Boom!!!

The skies above the imperial palace repeatedly exploded as more and more major powers descended. It was the other major powers of the Nuwa Alliance, who had all hastened here to help out. They included Exalted Celestial Thundergod, Exalted Celestial Carefree, Buddha Amitabha, Buddha Maitreya, and more.

Although this fight took time to describe, it had actually occurred at high speed. Only brief moments had passed between Ji Ning's true body being killed, his Primaltwin appearing within the Envoy, the Envoy being captured, and Crazy Ji and the woodcutter intervening.

A very short period of time had passed...but now, all the major powers

were completely focused on the woodcutter rather than Ji Ning.

“It’s been so many years. Sorry for the trouble, Master.” The woodcutter looked towards Subhuti.

“Haha...I imagine Three Purities, Tathagata, and the others would’ve fought over the chance to accept Houyi as a disciple.” Subhuti laughed merrily. “Wonderful. You’ve finally decided to come out. I had thought that you wouldn’t come out this time.”

“My junior apprentice-brother was very nearly killed. How much longer could I possibly wait?” The woodcutter looked at the distant, unnerved figures of Daomother Devilhand and Keeper Everwood. “As I see it...right now, our priority should be having a nice discussion with you of the Seamless Gate.”

“It is indeed time for a chat.” A red-robed, azure-haired figure appeared in the air.

“Windfiend.” The woodcutter looked towards the man.

A large number of major powers had appeared in the air above the imperial palace, but none of them dared to make a sound; all of them were strictly conversing through quiet mental messages to each other.

As for Ning, still within the Envoy of All Things, he raised his head to stare at the midair woodcutter, astonishment in his heart. “Eldest disciple? Woodcutter? Houyi?”

Chapter 28: Negotiations

The eldest disciple of their league, the low-key woodcutter who always spent his time chopping down trees at Mount Innerheart...was actually Houyi?

When Ji Ning had first started to train in [Houyi's Archery], the woodcutter had walked past him a few times, hatchet over his shoulders. He had even given Ning a few critical words of enlightenment when Ning was at a bottleneck. Ning hadn't thought much of it back then, as he thought it was normal for someone as powerful as the eldest apprentice-brother to be able to provide him with some guidance. Who would've thought that the man was actually the creator of [Houyi's Archery], Houyi himself!

"Junior apprentice-brother." Crazy Ji fanned himself, smiling as he called out.

"Junior apprentice-brother." A streak of light flew towards him from far away, landing on the ground next to him. It was the Monkey King, dressed in dazzling golden armor.

"Second apprentice-brother. Sixth apprentice-brother." Ning hurriedly called out to the two of them. As he did so, he couldn't help but take a close look at his sixth apprentice-brother. There were many legends of the Primordial Era that circulated amongst the nations of Earth. Although some of them weren't quite accurate, his sixth apprentice-brother Sun Wukong was a tremendously famous figure on Earth. But of course, by now Ning had met with many major powers.

Lu Dongbin, Daoist Three Purities, Patriarch Subhuti, Lord Tathagata the Buddha...he had met them all. Thus, Ning was quite calm when meeting with his sixth apprentice-brother for the first time. He was just a bit curious about the man.

"Heh heh...I didn't expect my eldest apprentice-brother to actually be Houyi." Sun Wukong chortled merrily. "When I first went to apprentice myself to Master, he actually gave me directions. I had thought him to be

an ordinary woodcutter. Only later did I realize that he was actually our eldest apprentice-brother! Even back then, I mumbled to myself that he was really good at hiding his abilities...but only today do I know he is actually the great divinity Houyi of the Primordial Era. His level of subterfuge is quite extraordinary!”

Houyi had become famous very, very early on. When he had slain the Golden Crows, Sun Wukong hadn't even been born into the world!

“I became apprenticed to Master very early on, but even I didn't know of his true history.” Crazy Ji chortled merrily, “When I became apprenticed to Master, our eldest apprentice-brother was already there by his side. However, even back then he spent his days as a woodcutter chopping trees. Honestly, I was quite puzzled back then; he was clearly Master's disciple, but why was it that I never saw him asking Master for guidance? But Master told me that our eldest apprentice-brother already had the power of a True God and Daofather, and that there was no way to ‘teach’ him; he needed to gain his own insights. Thus, I didn't think too much on it.”

“I heard that long ago, because of Chang'e, our eldest apprentice-brother actually slaughtered a path to the Lunar Star, planning to chop down the osmanthus tree on the Lunar Star. However, whenever he struck at the tree, it would immediately reheal. No matter what he did, he couldn't chop the tree down. At Mount Innerheart, our eldest apprentice-brother spends all his days chopping down trees...is it because he plans to once more pay a visit to the Moon Palace of the Lunar Star?” The Monkey King lowered his voice and even went so far as to block out sound from the surrounding area.

“Damned monkey, do you think that our eldest apprentice-brother's affairs are something for you to pry into?” Crazy Ji hurriedly reprimanded him. “You can't talk about this matter.”

“Eldest apprentice-brother can't hear me. I'd only ever discuss it behind his back.” Sun Wukong blinked a few times.

Even Ji Ning knew that the affair between Houyi and Chang'e had been

a scarring one for Houyi! Picking at another's scars and scabs was not a good idea.

"Let's go. Buddha, Three Purities, and the others are negotiating with those of the Seamless Chaosworld. Let's take a break for now." Crazy Ji gave Sun Wukong a hard stare. "Don't cause trouble, you monkey. If you piss off our eldest apprentice-brother, none of us would be able to save you."

"Right." The Monkey King shivered slightly, nodding repeatedly. "During the Primordial Era, he roamed the world with his archery skills. Now, even his hatchet skills have become so incredibly powerful. Daomother Devilhand is an awe-inspiringly famous figure on the level of the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism, but our eldest apprentice-brother was actually able to sever her arm with a single blow of his hatchet."

"That was because Daomother Devilhand was too proud and overconfident," Crazy Ji said. "Our eldest apprentice-brother was incredibly powerful even during the Primordial Era; even the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism were forced to use all their might when facing him. For Daomother Devilhand to actually try to face him with a single arm...hmpf, it would've been shocking if she didn't suffer for it."

Ning laughed. He was about to put away the Envoy of All Things, but he suddenly then thought of how Daomother Devilhand had struck him with a blow, causing him to uncontrollably fall to the ground. Ning took a careful look at the Envoy.

"Eh?" Ning's face changed. "What's this?" Ning immediately noticed that the energy core of the Envoy, located at its waist, had actually cracked open.

Ning hurriedly tried to use the Envoy's power, only to discover that it was now completely inoperable. It was as though the cracks here had severed the Envoy's ability to send energy around its body. The Envoy had suddenly become useless.

"It's been made useless? How?!" Ning was stunned.

The Envoy of All Things.

B-but...this was the most powerful tool he had at his disposal! When using it, he would be able to unleash a level of power close to that of the overlord Daofathers, on the same level as Subhuti and Daofather Shadowless. Just like that, the Envoy had suddenly been rendered useless?! It must be understood that even full-force blows from the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism would barely be able to damage the thing!

Daomother Devilhand had landed a gentle blow on the Envoy's waist... and just like that, the Envoy had been ruined? Still, it had been quite strange; a single blow had been all it took to cause the Envoy-Ning to collapse.

"Second apprentice-brother, sixth apprentice-brother." Ning said in a low voice, "The Envoy of All Things has been ruined."

"What?" Crazy Ji and the Monkey King were both shocked.

Ning nodded solemnly. "It should've been ruined by Daomother Devilhand. I don't know how she accomplished it."

The Monkey King gnashed his teeth. As for Crazy Ji, he frowned and said in a soft voice, "Mm...this Envoy golem was created by the Seamless Gate. They probably put in certain mechanisms to prevent us from being able to take them over, such as a self-destruct mechanism that would cripple it. However, activating such mechanisms probably isn't easy. During the war for karmic luck, your opponents have all been Emphyrean Gods and True Immortals; they wouldn't have the ability to ruin your Envoy. Daomother Devilhand, however, is an overlord-class major power. Given that she knows exactly how the Envoy is structurally composed and where its weaknesses are, it makes sense that she would be able to easily destroy it."

"Right. I heard that when the Lord of All Things died, all of his Envoys were rendered completely inoperable as well." The Monkey King nodded in agreement.

"In contrast, the Envoys of the Seamless Gate can only be destroyed by the personal touch of someone like Daomother Devilhand. Comparatively speaking, they still aren't a match for the Envoys of the Lord of All

Things,” Crazy Ji said.

Crazy Ji suddenly added, “Report this to Master right away.”

“Right, tell Master right away,” the Monkey King agreed.

Only the most supreme figures took part in the negotiations between the Nuwa Alliance and the Seamless Gate.

Time slowly trickled forward.

The other major powers continued to wait quietly at the Deerchaser world for the results of their negotiations. Ji Ning, Crazy Ji, the Monkey King, and the other members of the Mount Innerheart League all waited patiently as well.

A long amount of time passed. The skies were slowly beginning to turn bright. Only now did the major powers of the Seamless Gate leave the Deerchaser world.

“Master. Eldest apprentice-brother.”

Ji Ning, Crazy Ji, and the Monkey King had been seated, but now all three of them hurriedly rose to their feet. Patriarch Subhuti and Houyi were walking shoulder-to-shoulder towards their residence from afar.

“How did it go, Master?” The Monkey King asked hurriedly.

“Your junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning suffered a heavy loss. Our Nuwa Alliance as a whole didn’t do that badly,” Patriarch Subhuti said.

“For me to suffer a loss is nothing. Our side gaining an advantage in this war is what really matters,” Ning said.

Subhuti looked at Ning. “Myself, Houyi, and the other major powers discussed this in secret. Our main concern is that for the Seamless Gate to suddenly act against you in such a manner, they must have made many careful preparations for the possible consequences. They are prepared, but we are not...and we currently hold the upper hand in the war for karmic luck. Thus, although we were infuriated, we still would not choose to rashly launch the Endwar right away.”

Houyi nodded as well. “But of course, if the Seamless Gate insists on

starting the Endwar, then so be it.”

“Clearly, your eldest apprentice-brother’s sudden appearance and power has caught them rather off-guard,” Subhuti said. “The negotiations ended up being fairly beneficial for our Nuwa Alliance.”

“What were the results?” The Monkey King asked hurriedly.

“The Seamless Gate had only one request. Ji Ning is not permitted to take part in the war for karmic luck,” Subhuti said.

Ning’s face changed.

“WHAT?! But that’s...!” The Monkey King was instantly enraged.

Subhuti continued to talk. “We accepted. Our request...was that not a single one of the Seamless Gate’s Envoys are to be permitted to take part in the war for karmic luck either. Although the Seamless Gate has lost one of them, they still have nine more! If all of them were activated, even my disciple Ji Ning would have to clone himself several times over to deal with them.”

“Right.” Ning nodded. It was true. He needed time to deal with even a single Envoy, to first destabilize it and then knock it to the ground. If there were two Envoys working together, there would be nothing Ning could do against him. The other seven Envoys would be free to fight and kill as they pleased.

“Ji Ning suffered a heavy loss, after all; they had to pay a price for what they did. As for Swordfather Darklight, he died for nothing; his death wasn’t taken into account.” Subhuti looked towards Ning. “Disciple, there’s no way you can take part in the rest of the war for karmic luck, but none of their Envoys will be allowed to take part as well. You really have accomplished something tremendous for our side. If there’s anything you need, just tell me.”

Chapter 29: Three Great Secret Manuals

“No need.” Ji Ning shook his head.

“Whatever you need, whatever you are lacking for...just speak.” Subhuti continued, “Three Purities, Tathagata, and the others all feel that we owe you.”

Ning shook his head again.

He had gained many legacies from World God Northrest, and he had also acquired the treasures of the many prisoners of Prisonworld 17. He really didn't need to ask these major powers for anything.

“Junior apprentice-brother.” Houyi looked at Ning.

Ning looked back at this plainly dressed man, the legendary Houyi. The great divinity still looked as though he was nothing but an ordinary mortal, but Ning felt true admiration towards him. Long ago, Houyi had dominated the Three Realms through archery! But today, he had actually been able to injure Daomother Devilhand when using his hatchet. How powerful would he be when using his arrows? How truly unfathomable! Houyi's sudden appearance and intervention had stunned everyone. They weren't just stunned at the fact that he was Houyi; they were mainly stunned that the number one divine archer of the Three Realms, Houyi, was actually so terrifying when wielding a hatchet.

“In the end, the war for karmic luck will only have a certain degree of effect on the final Endwar,” Houyi said. “In the end, winning the Endwar will primarily be dependent on the respective major powers on each side! The more powerful one is, the more of an impact one will make on the battlefield. The gain or loss of an overlord-class Daofather will have an enormous impact on the battlefield...and of course, if a Pangu-level expert appears, that person will be able to completely dominate all comers. In that scenario, a war for karmic luck would be completely useless.”

Ning nodded.

“Thus...focus calmly on your training.” Houyi looked at Ning. “Train

hard. If there's no need for you to take part in the war for karmic luck, then you might as well focus on your training. In the end, the most important affair of all is the Endwar."

"Right." Ning agreed with this analysis.

Ning wasn't opposed to not being able to take part in the Endwar. What he truly wished for was the destruction of the Seamless Gate, and his deepest desire was to personally kill the Godking!

.....

The Allfiend world.

"Windfiend, I really am not happy that the Envoys are not going to be able to take part in the world for karmic luck." Daomother Devilhand's slender face was as cold as ice, and her eyes were filled with murder.

"It might be a good thing that the Envoys will not take part." The nearby Keeper Everwood explained, "Although Ji Ning's true body has been destroyed, he still has his Primaltwin. If he uses his Primaltwin to control the Rahu Formation, he has the power to kidnap yet another Envoy. He'll be strong enough to be close to matching overlord-class major powers. That'll make him equivalent to a host of Envoys."

"Letting him capture an Envoy is one thing. Would we really let him capture a second?" Daomother Devilhand laughed coldly.

"Ji Ning isn't alone; he has the entire army of the Nuwa Alliance supporting him. There are no absolute certainties in war." Keeper Everwood shook his head. "And this time, our side was in the wrong to begin with. The furious Nuwa Alliance might very well have actually launched the Endwar. You saw Houyi's power for yourself."

"I was overconfident. I had no idea he was Houyi. If I knew he was Houyi, do you think I would've fought against him with just one hand?" Daomother Devilhand shook her head. "If we both fought at full strength, it's not certain who would win and who would lose."

Thus far, the Lord of All Fiends had remained silent. Now, however, he made a calm comment: "But Houyi was using a hatchet. What if he was

using his Houyi Godbow?”

Daomother Devilhand was stunned.

“Houyi is clearly far more powerful than he was during the Primordial Era; even I can vaguely sense danger emanating from him.” The Lord of All Fiends shook his head. “The true purpose of building the Envoys is to have Daofathers command them and use them against the enemy overlord-class powers. If they can’t be used in the war for the karmic luck, then that is that. It’s almost worth it just to ensure that Ji Ning cannot participate either.”

“Right; did you ruin that Envoy he had?” The Lord of All Fiends asked.

“I did.” Daomother Devilhand nodded.

There had been multiple layers to their plans. Ruining the Envoy was one of them. If one of them was to destroy a critical part of the golem, Grandmaster Blackheaven would be able to easily fix the damage once they brought it back. But since the Nuwa Alliance lacked the critical formation-diagram, there was no way whatsoever for them to repair it.

“Good.” The Lord of All Fiends nodded. “Ji Ning cannot participate in the war for karmic luck; he’ll only be able to participate in the Endwar. Without the Envoy, he’s now much less of a threat.”

“When the Endwar comes, Ji Ning won’t amount to much,” Daomother Devilhand agreed calmly.

“His true body has been destroyed, while his Primaltwin is only a Ki Refiner,” Keeper Everwood said. “There is no way a pure Ki Refiner can reach the overlord class of power.”

It was true. In all the Three Realms, be it in the Nuwa Alliance or the Seamless Gate, the most supreme figures were not merely Ki Refiners.

Three Purities, Tathagata, Fuxi; they were born True Gods of Primordial Chaos, but gave up their bodies when they sent themselves into the cycles of reincarnation. However, even in their later lives they were dual refiners, training as Fiendgods and as Ki Refiners! Shennong and Suiren both had incredibly powerful divine bodies, while even Subhuti and Old

Man Yuan were born as True Gods of Primordial Chaos! As for the Seamless Gate's side, Daomother Devilhand, the Lord of All Fiends, and Keeper Everwood all specialized in close combat; all three of them trained as both Ki Refiners and as Fiendgod Body Refiners!

Theoretically, a pure Ki Refiner could also reach the overlord level if they reached a sufficiently high level of insight into the Dao. However, to date the Three Realms had never produced anyone who could reach such heights as a pure Ki Refiner. Moreover, attempting to reach that level of power purely through cultivating in the Dao would take time. Ji Ning had yet to master even a single Heavenly Dao; he was far, far away from becoming an overlord.

Thus, the Seamless Gate believed Ning to be much less of a threat with his true body gone. This made quite logical sense.

"If he only has a Primaltwin, he's much less dangerous now. He's only been training for so many years; his weakness is quite apparent." Keeper Everwood shook his head. "This Ji Ning truly is a monstrously talented figure. If he was given another hundred thousand years, he probably would become an extremely dangerous figure. Unfortunately for him, he won't have enough time to train..."

"Right."

"I still feel as though giving up our plans to have Envoys take part in the war for karmic luck will have an excessively large impact." Daomother Devilhand frowned.

"There's no need to discuss this matter any longer," the Lord of All Fiends said. "Right – Everwood, how are your negotiations with Old Man Yuan coming along?"

"He wants access to our Seamless Gate's three great secret manuals." Keeper Everwood let out a sigh. "He wants all three, not a single one less. Only if we give him all three would he be willing to join us."

"The three great secret manuals? And all three of them?" Daomother Devilhand let out a cold laugh. "Old Man Yuan really is quite ambitious. Even I have merely studied two of them."

Long, long ago, when the Seamless Chaosworld was still intact, when the Lord of the Demonheart had been roving the primordial chaos he had accidentally discovered three incomparably profound secret manuals. These manuals were the [Seven Hearts], [Coiling River], and [Shadowless]. These became the most important and most profound techniques techniques which the Lord of the Demonheart used, and they were one of the most important reasons why he was able to unify the entire Seamless Chaosworld in such a short period of time.

In order to draw more allies to his side, Lord Demonheart would occasionally bestow the techniques upon others.

Originally, [Seven Hearts] was something which Lord Demonheart kept for himself; he was only willing to teach the [Coiling River] and [Shadowless] to the others. However, after the Lord of All Fiends rescued the entire Seamless Gate after they lost the war, Lord Demonheart had decided to bestow [Seven Hearts] upon the Lord of All Fiends, even though Lord Demonheart himself had already become one with the Heavenly Daos.

In other words, the only people in the entire Seamless Gate who had studied all three of those secret manuals were Lord Demonheart and the Lord of All Fiends.

“The [Seven Hearts] is a heartforce technique,” the Lord of All Fiends said. “Truthfully speaking, most major powers can’t even make use of it. One has to reach the fifth level of heartforce before one can master this technique. In truth, it’s not impossible for us to impart it to Old Man Yuan. His faction has quite a few major powers, after all, and they are quite powerful.”

“Right.” Keeper Everwood and Daomother Devilhand both nodded.

The most powerful members of Old Man Yuan’s faction were known as the Four Ancestors of the River Source! They also had other major powers within their faction as well. Although Old Man Yuan himself had already revealed himself to be close to the overlord level of power, who knew if he was hiding his true strength?

Thus, both sides wished to draw this incredibly powerful faction into their ranks.

“My worry is that once we give him the three secret manuals, he’ll then decide to join the Nuwa Alliance and hand them over,” the Lord of All Fiends said. “I heard that alien Outsiders have a way to set down something known as a ‘lifeblood oath’, but none of us have any idea as to how that is done.”

“I’ll go speak with him a bit further.” Keeper Everwood frowned. “We have to draw Old Man Yuan into our orbit. If he joins us, the Nuwa Alliance will have lost one of its original members. This will represent a significant shift in the balance of power. We have to recruit him. Also – Windfiend, I’ll leave the other matters in your hands.”

“Yes, leave the matters in the primordial chaos to me.” The Lord of All Fiends nodded. “It has been more than half a chaos cycle since the war that ended the Primordial Era. Although we’ve hidden much of our power, the Nuwa Alliance is not to be underestimated. Don’t forget that Nuwa had reached the World God level of power. It’s hard to predict what she left behind her for her alliance.”

Both sides were extremely cautious. The war for karmic luck was just one element out of many that would impact the Endwar. However, both sides were doing everything they could to increase their chances of winning...because when the Endwar erupted, either your side would die or my side would die.

.....

Within the endless primordial chaos. Inside a frozen star.

This star was fairly unremarkable, and it didn’t even have a name assigned to it. It was, however, the place where Ning had placed Prisonworld 17.

Ji Ning had already been forgotten by the Seamless Gate, having been deemed to no longer be a threat. And yet, at this moment, he quietly emerged from the prisonworld.

The black-robed Ning stood there within the deep crevice, staring at the endless glacial ice before him. “In the coming days, unless something major happens, I’ll just calmly spend my time in the prisonworld, working on improving my power as best as I can.”

Chapter 30: Recovering

Ji Ning was all by himself within the deep crevice, but his heartforce had been spread out to cover the entire frozen star. It was like a star-sized lake, and layers of ripples emanated out from it, sweeping through every part of the star.

This was a little trick for using heartforce to scout, and it was one of the many techniques World God Northrest had left behind. Although it was just a little trick, this heartforce scouting technique ensured that none of the major powers of the Three Realms would be able to follow him without him sensing it.

When roaming the primordial chaos, it was important to know many auxiliary techniques, such as aura-suppressing techniques, heartforce scouting techniques, disguising techniques, heartforce soul-locking techniques...these minor auxiliary techniques wouldn't allow him to grow more powerful, but they greatly increased his survivability. Without them, it would be easy to fall and perish when wandering the primordial chaos.

These auxiliary techniques seemed unremarkable, but in truth they were amongst the most important and most elite of techniques which World God Northrest had left behind. Not even the Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals of the chaos-kingdom of Pangaea would have the chance to learn these techniques.

"I had thought that after I revealed such incredible power, the Seamless Gate would be even more wary of me and perhaps even trail me. I actually took an incredibly roundabout way to get her...but now, it seems, they no longer view me as being a threat at all." The black-robed Ning let out a mental sigh.

Prior to visiting this frozen star, he had paid a visit to the Crescent world, so as to impede the Seamless Gate from following him. But alas, it was pointless; the Seamless Gate hadn't even been tracking him at all.

"It makes sense. Since I can no longer take part in the war for karmic

luck, I am now much less of a threat to them than I was before. As far as the major powers are concerned, without the Envoy I am far too weak for them to be worried about!" The black-robed Ning shook his head, then disappeared into thin air.

Within the prisonworld.

A white-robed youth was seated in the lotus position, and in front of him was a great cauldron that glowed with faint light.

This was the Five Elements Cauldron. The Five Elements Cauldron no longer looked as dirty and ragged as it had before; clearly, it was now revealing its true luster.

"There he is." The white-robed youth raised his head to look over as the black-robed Ning flew towards him from far away. When the black-robed Ning landed, a black lightning serpent instantly appeared out of nowhere, quickly scurrying into the white-robed youth's body.

Ning's true bodies were all lightning-attribute bodies, which was why they were all capable of controlling the Ninehorn Lightning Serpent with ease. The Primaltwin was very powerful but had no way of controlling the serpent.

"I used up a veritable sea of treasures, melting down almost all the items I acquired from this prisonworld for Five Elements essence. Who would've thought that I would be unable to repair even the surface appearance of Violetjewel?" The black-robed Ning looked at the ancient stone platform. Atop the stone platform was the completely blood-colored sword Violetjewel, the body of the sword still covered with countless cracks.

Once Violetjewel absorbed enough Five Elements essence for its surface layer to be repaired, it would be possible for Ning to carry it into battle, and it would be far more powerful than a Chaos weapon. If Ning was able to acquire enough essence to completely and truly repair it, it would possess enough power to intoxicate even Chaos Immortals and World Gods.

"I feel as though only a fifth of the surface layer has been repaired."

Ning secretly shook his head.

There had been more than a thousand Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals in the prisonworld, and Ning had already extorted all of them!

He had also acquired quite a few treasures from True Gods and True Immortals as well. Aside from a tiny number of treasures that he kept for himself, he had melted down all the rest.

“And this isn’t to forge or reforge Violetjewel, it’s just to repair the superficial, surface damage. For even the surface layer to require so much Five Elements essence...if I had instead used the essence to upgrade my Goldstar Beads of the Heavens, some of them probably would’ve been upgraded to Chaos treasures by now,” Ning mused to himself.

Five Elements essence was primarily used to repair treasures, but they would also be used to enhance and upgrade certain special treasures. Some treasures had excellent foundations and were thus able to absorb Five Elements essence and be upgraded by it.

The Goldstar Beads of the Heavens were no ordinary treasures.

They weren’t like the Protocosmic spirit-treasures which were naturally born from Heaven and Earth after Pangu established the world. Instead, they were formed in the primordial chaos from the leftover essence of enormous chaos stars that had reached the ends of their lives, with the essence having condensed into gems. They had just so happened to be floating the area when Pangu had established the world, and thus had accidentally been drawn into the world and become transformed into Protocosmic spirit-treasures.

Gems like them were actually icredibly valuable! When smaller chaos stars died they generally didn’t have enough leftover essence for gems to be crystallized. Only larger chaos stars were able to give birth to these gems. Every single gem could be used as a valuable ingredient and would generally be used to forge a Chaos treasure. Because they ended up floating into the newly-established Pangu Chaosworld, they ended up being titled the Goldstar Beads of the Heavens and used to smash people.

But this was truly a waste!

Those Protocosmic spirit-treasures that were born from the Pangu Chaosworld itself didn't have much potential, but the Goldstar Beads of the Heavens had tremendous potential. They were capable of withstanding reinforcement from Five Treasures essence and being upgraded to become Chaos treasures. Alas, the amount of essence needed to upgrade all of those 3600 beads to become Chaos treasures...Ning knew it to be nothing more than a pipe dream.

"A set of 3600 Chaos treasures?" Ning secretly shook his head. Not all the treasures of the entire prisonworld combined might be enough.

The Five Elements Cauldron was placed right next to the white-robed Ning, who remained seated in the lotus position, a bottle of chaos nectar before him.

Whoosh.

One drop of precious Chaos nectar after another was absorbed into the white-robed youth's body, and then a series of phantom, ghostly figures flew out of him. When each phantom landed on the ground, it solidified into yet another white-robed youth.

Time slowly flowed on, and one white-robed youth after another was materialized. Ning's bodies were still at merely the second stage of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods]; he had relied on the [One True Body] technique to merge seventeen of those bodies together. Now, he once more replicated his seventeen destroyed bodies by using the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] to absorb chaos nectar.

"Now, [Icefire Jindan Smelting]."

Each of the seventeen white-robed youths had a globe of Ninefire Lava and Iceheart Pith floating before them.

The black-robed Ning stood off to one side, staring at the Ninefire Lava and the Iceheart Pith. He secretly sighed to himself, "I still have quite a bit of Ninefire Lava, but there's not much Iceheart Pith left. After this, I'll only have around fifty thousand kilograms of Iceheart Pith left."

His main body had been destroyed. Thanks to chaos nectar, Iceheart

Pith, and Ninefire Lava, he was able to completely heal himself in a single short month! However, if the main body was destroyed yet again...he didn't have enough Iceheart Pith, nor did he have much chaos nectar left. If he wanted to recover from it a second time, he would probably need an extremely long period of time to do so. The same had been true of Youngflame Freak in the past; if too many of his bodies died, he would need an extremely long period of time to recover.

A month later. The seventeen white-robed youths had all seen their golden pellet Jindans upgraded, and they now once more used the [One True Body] technique to merge together.

"I'm back to full power."

A hint of a murderous look flashed through the white-robed Ning's eyes.

He would never forget the sight of the Godking annihilating Yu Wei's soul. That sight would probably haunt him for the rest of his life.

"Godking. I'm not strong enough yet, so just keep waiting for now. I'll be back." Ning's heart was filled with the utmost resolve.

"Let's go." Swoosh. The white-robed youth collected the black-robed Ning, then flew outwards, leaving behind just a single clone to continue using the Five Elements Cauldron. Ning would use this clone to as he had in the past, to serve as a base template for slowly rebuilding his other bodies if his main body was destroyed. Thus, Ning absolutely would not permit this body to be merged with the others through the [One True Body] technique. If he did that and then died, his death would be a true death.

After flying for a while, the white-robed Ning's speed began to lessen. A series of stone steles lay in the grasslands before him, like monoliths that jutted out from the plains. These stone steles surrounded an unspeakably beautiful jade palace.

"I was gravely wounded, which was a disaster, but the chance to fight against Swordfather Darklight, Daofather Shadowless, and Daomother Devilhand was a blessing," Ning mused to himself. Although he was able

to battle against True Gods and True Immortals in the prisonworld, the ones that were imprisoned here generally had yet to master any of the Heavenly Daos.

If they did, they would become Ancestral Immortals!

It was precisely because they hadn't been able to master a Heavenly Dao that these True Gods and True Immortals, in terms of raw power, were generally just comparable to ordinary Daofathers. Occasionally, a few possessed divine abilities that allowed them to release the power of a elite Daofather, but the likes of Swordfather Darklight and Daofather Shadowless were experts even amongst their elite Daofather peers. As for Daomother Devilhand, she was an overlord-class figure!

Although the Daofathers of the Three Realms had relatively weaker foundations than the denizens of Pangaea, in terms of insights into the Dao, they were far superior. In terms of insights into the Dao, only a minority of the Ancestral Immortals and Elder Gods who were imprisoned in Prisonworld 17 were a match for the likes of Daomother Devilhand.

Daomother Devilhand's palm-arts were reputed to be number one in all the Three Realms, superior to even that of Lord Tathagata the Buddha.

When Ning fought against her, he had naturally been considerably enlightened and stimulated.

"I need to carefully think over what I saw and quietly ponder it all. Perhaps I'll be able to make use of this setback to reach the fifth stage of swordforce." After Ning entered the jade shrine, he sat down on a prayer mat woven from a type of Chaos treasure known as Winterheart Grass. His heart and soul quickly grew calm, and he began to engage in silent meditation and reflection. He thought back through all the things he had seen when battling against Swordfather Darklight, Daofather Shadowless, and Daomother Devilhand.

Chapter 31: Fighting, Killing

Daofather Shadowless, in terms of power, was slightly superior to Swordfather Darklight, but that was primarily because of his divine abilities. In terms of raw technique and skill, Swordfather Darklight was actually superior.

His sword-arts were the strongest sword-arts the Seamless Gate had, and his assassination techniques were second to none. Alas...he had died under Houyi's hatchet.

Ji Ning pondered over Swordfather Darklight's sword-arts in close detail, replaying every single sword-stroke in his mind and learning much from them. Daomother Devilhand's palm-arts...although there was no way for Ning to understand them, he had been able to see some of the underlying mysteries behind them. As quietly reflected on them now, he was able to discover more and more of their secrets.

By the time Ning opened his eyes, nine days had gone past.

The white-robed Ning left the jade shrine. With a wave of his finger, he materialized a longsword before him.

Swish! Swish! Swish! Sword-light flickered in a light, graceful manner. It was occasionally sharp and valiant, occasionally strange and mysterious, and occasionally brutal and dominating.

"I can clearly sense that I'm just a tiny step away...but why is it that I'm just not able to break through?" Ning shook his head, murmuring to himself. He had thought that the insights he had gained from this fight would allow him to reach the fifth stage of swordforce. Daomother Devilhand was an overlord-class expert, after all, and she had mastered four of the Heavenly Daos of the Seamless Chaosworld: Earth, Fire, Water, Wind. A chance to face her in a life-and-death battle was a rare opportunity indeed.

When Ning had been meditating, he could sense that his improvements had been quite remarkable. And yet, he was still unable to reach the fifth stage of swordforce.

“To advance from the fourth stage of swordforce to the fifth stage really is extraordinarily difficult.” Ning had a sudden thought, and he immediately waved his hand. Boom! Boom! Boom! One enormous goldstar bead after another came crashing down upon the flat plains, falling down around the scattered stone steles. After all 3600 goldstar beads landed, the Nine Chaos Seals began to manifest atop them.

Ning stood there, carefully staring at the giant goldstar beads and the stone steles covered in sword-arts.

The stone steles had been left behind by World God Northrest for his successors. As for the Nine Chaos Seals of the goldstar beads, they were even more arcane.

He spent half a day staring at them. Then, Ning shook his head. “Come back.” He waved his hand, instantly causing the jade shrine, the ninety-eight stone steles, and 3600 goldstar beads to all be collected.

“In the end, life-and-death battles are what truly matter.”

Swoosh. The white-robed Ning instantly transformed into a lightning serpent, speeding off into the distance at high speed.

A short while later...

“Eh?” A skinny, short man with horns on his forehead was seated in the lotus position in the desert. He raised his golden eyes, staring intently at Ning. He laughed coldly, “Overseer, why have you come again? Last time, you used a pile of Protocosmic spirit-treasures to threaten me. What are you planning to do this time? Try everything you have. You want me to submit to you, a trifling True Immortal? You are absolutely dreaming! You-...eh? This time, you’ve completely suppressed and withdrawn your aura to the point where even I cannot sense it. Did the other True Gods and True Immortals berate you so much that you ended up deciding to hide that puny little aura of yours?”

The white-robed Ning stared at the skinny, short man.

For the sake of conducting more soulscours and acquiring more Protocosmic spirit-treasures, Ning had taken all of his spoils of war and

used them to threaten all of the True Gods and True Immortals of the prisonworld, one at a time. All of those True Gods and True Immortals understood that if they continued to fight against Ning, they would eventually die. When they saw how many Protocosmic spirit-treasures Ning had, they knew that it was true that some True Gods and True Immortals had eventually lowered their heads.

However, only about twenty True Gods and True Immortals in the entire prisonworld had been willing to surrender without even fighting back. The others would not lower their heads so easily! Only when they truly sensed death impending would they be willing to bow their heads towards Jindan, a puny True Immortal with a third-tier Jindan.

“Puny?” Ning’s aura suddenly soared to the heavens, so powerful as to cause the smirking man’s face to instantly change.

“Y-you...” The skinny man stared at Ning in shock.

Ning’s current aura was no weaker than his.

“Have a fight with me.” Ning wielded a Darknorth sword in each hand, and with a swish he transformed into a streak of light that flew towards the skinny man.

“He actually dares to fight me in close combat?” The skinny man licked his lips. “Although he’s grown much more powerful, that’s only in terms of the Immortal energy in his body. His divine body shouldn’t be as strong as mine yet. Since he dares to fight me in close combat...fine. To be able to kill an Overseer before dying will be worth it.”

The skinny man’s heart was filled with a desire to do battle. A pair of enormous axes appeared in his hands, and his body rapidly began to increase in size as well. He had been incredibly skinny, all skin and bones, but now his muscles rapidly began to grow out. His emaciated body instantly became tall and strong, and his golden eyes became filled with a dominating, savage aura.

Twin axes in his hands, he let out a wild laugh. “Since you seek death, let me send you on your way!”

Swoosh! Swoosh!

The two instantly collided.

Clang! The True God actually stumbled two steps back. Clutching at his axes, he stared in absolute shock at Ning, who had been knocked flying backwards as well. He said disbelievingly, “You’ve surpassed the limits of the Heavenly Daos? Y-your sword arts...where did you learn them from?”

Every single technique that surpassed the Heavenly Daos in some way was incomparably priceless. Even he hadn’t had the chance to learn one of them.

Just now, he had very nearly been chopped in half by Ning’s sword-strike. Fortunately, his reaction speed was fast and his axe was large, allowing him to use it almost like a shield. This was the reason why he had been able to block that strange, bizarre sword-art.

“That’s not something for the likes of you to find out about.” Ning narrowed his eyes, staring at his foe. How formidable! Although his foe’s axe-arts were ordinary, he was still a True God. Ning was just a half-step True God! In power, speed, and every other aspect, he was on a slightly lower level. The only reason why he could even pose a threat was because he had the number one sword-arts of the Three Realms.

However...that’s what made it fun!

Only when he was under enough pressure in a true life-and-death battle would he be able to truly temper his sword-arts. Although battling against the prisoners of the prisonworld did carry some degree of risk, the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] technique ensured that he’d have a very good chance of successfully escaping any dangerous situation.

By comparison, in similar a battle in the outside world, he would be in much more danger than he was here.

“Be careful. Don’t end up letting yourself be killed by me,” Ning said.

“Hmph. You? Even though you have a sword-art that surpasses the Heavenly Daos, you aren’t a match for me.” This True God prisoner was quite proud and arrogant. His foe was clearly not a True God. How could

he possibly lose?

Swoosh! Swoosh!

The two clashed against each other repeatedly in close combat.

This sort of close combat was far more dangerous than a fight in which both sides used magic treasures to attack from afar. In addition, after having being put at a disadvantage in their first clash, the True God prisoner had become much more wary of Ning's sword-arts.

Ning's sword showed absolutely no mercy at all.

The True God prisoner wanted to seize this opportunity to annihilate Ji Ning, the current Overseer. Perhaps in Ning's relics, he would be able to find the technique which had allowed Ning to surpass the limits of the Heavenly Daos.

This sort of battle...it was exactly what Ning needed right now.

Clang! Swish! Slash! Ning's sword-light and the True God's axe clashed again and again against each other.

Their battle grew longer and longer. One hour. Two hours. What truly astonished the True God prisoners was...he could vaguely sense that this Overseer's sword-arts were actually slowly rising in power. What he didn't realize was that ever since Ning had left Undermoon Lake, he had had very few chances to engage in true life-and-death battles; the only real fight he had thus far was against Daomother Devilhand and the others.

As for his capture of the Envoy, that was an act of utter domination.

This fight against the True God prisoner was the first time Ning had truly been able to go all-out in a sustained battle. The insights he had gained over the course of six hundred years in Undermoon Lake, combined with the new ideas he had gained while battling Daomother Devilheart, were all being brought to the surface. In fact, as they continued to fight, he began to suddenly gain insight into some of the intricacies of the sword-arts left behind by World God Northrest that he previously didn't understand.

Swish! Sword-light flashed.

The True God prisoner's body was split in half.

Ning put away his sword, standing quietly to one side and watching as the prisoner's divine body merged together and healed.

The True God stared at Ning, a complicated look on his face. From the way in which Ning had continuously increased the power of his sword-arts, he could sense that Ning was far more talented and gifted than he was. In truth, every single person who was successfully in mastering a technique that surpassed the Heavenly Daos in some way was an absolutely peerless genius.

The True God prisoner said in a low voice, "I lost."

Ning felt a surge of joy in his heart.

Some of the mysteries of the sword couldn't be understood simply through meditation. Only true life-and-death battles would allow one to truly understand how those mysteries were to be used and applied.

"A pity that this True God's axe-arts aren't strong enough. It would've been better if he was stronger," Ning mused to himself. "A single life-and-death battle like this is worth more than a year's worth of meditation. Mm. Time to go seek out the next True God."

Of course, prior to finding the next True God, he would have to take away this prisoner's treasures. His Violetjewel sword was in desperate need of Five Elements essence.

In the past, he had to use some Protocosmic spirit-treasures to slowly grind away at the energy reserves of a True God or True Immortal in order to beat them. He would then tell them, 'So-and-so has already submitted to me. All those who resist me will die.' He would use words to threaten them and bully them. Although he was occasionally successful, those successes made up just a tiny portion of the total number of True Gods and True Immortals in the prisonworld. The more powerful one was, the less likely they would be willing to lower their heads.

To rely on slowly exhausting his foes required him to spend decades for

each True God and True Immortal.

But now, he could fight them head-on! Things would be much faster than before.

“Are you willing to submit?” Ning looked at the True God prisoner.

The True God prisoner returned to his emaciated, skinny form. Lowering his head, he gritted out the words, “I am willing.”

Chapter 32: An Unexpected Surprise

Ji Ning first soulscoured him, then took away his treasures. Of course... he gave the True God some spirit-pills as well. Due to their lengthy battle, this True God had used up quite a bit of his divine power; if he wasn't given enough spirit-pills, his life probably wouldn't last for much longer. Although there was no way to replenish his divine power, replenishing his Immortal energy would also suffice for him to sustain his life.

There were relatively few Ki Refiners who also trained as Fiendgod Refiners, but almost every single Fiendgod Body Refiner was also a Ki Refiner; the only question was how talented they were in that respect. Subhuti, Daoist Three Purities, Tathagata, and many others were all born as True Gods, and they eventually trained to become Daofathers of the Great Firmament as Ki Refiners.

Through the use of spirit-pills, these prisoners would be able to live a very, very long time. Right now, they only used up energy to keep themselves alive, after all; their energy expenditures were quite low.

"It seems that it is unlikely that I'll find what I need from the memories of these prisoners," Ning mused to himself. "Still, it makes sense. I've already acquired many techniques from World God Northrest. Given what I already have, it is quite unlikely that a prisoner of Pangaea will be able to provide me with a nice surprise. Still, I won't give up hope, no matter how faint it is."

Different chaosworlds would give birth to different civilizations. Perhaps some of them would produce unique techniques of their own. With the Endwar nigh, Ning naturally wanted to seize every chance he could find to grow more powerful.

One had to remember that the prisonworld itself had been located in the hands of someone as weak as Youngflame Freak. The prisoners of Pangaea were far more powerful than Youngflame Freak; perhaps one of them might've had a great stroke of fortune in the past and acquired certain special treasures or unique abilities.

Whoosh. Ning landed atop an island within a placid lake. With a wave of his hand, he caused the jade shrine to descend upon the island as well as many stone steles. Finally, the enormous goldstar beads plummeted like meteors to land on the island as well.

Ning stepped into the jade shrine, then sat down in the lotus position atop the prayer mat. He stilled his mind, beginning to mentally go through his recent battles and experiences.

Every single battle had to be analyzed with great care. He had to pull the experience he needed out of them and use it to improve himself.

There were only so many True Gods and True Immortals in the prisonworld; after fighting all of them, Ning would no longer be able to find any new opponents. Thus, he had to value every battle and opponent.

Ning spent more than ten days meditating on his insights, supported by the goldstar beads and the stone sword-steles. After ten days, he had gained all that he could, and so Ning put away the treasures and once more transformed into a streak of black lightning, flying towards the next True God.

Battle. Meditation. Battle. Meditation...

It became a regular pattern!

Ning gained experience from every single battle, allowing him to further perfect his sword-arts. However, upon encountering the fifth True God prisoner, Ning suffered a sudden, unexpected loss.

“Die.”

The tall, ugly, skinny old man’s six arms all rapidly expanded in length as he sent his six claws tearing towards Ning from multiple directions. His claw-arts were unfathomably strange, and Ning’s body was covered with blood. Just now, he had been able to withstand the first wave of attacks but his body had been ripped open. In the face of this terrifying opponent, it seemed that the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] wasn’t going to be very useful.

“Mirrors of the Heavens!” The battered Ning immediately willed it, and

the skies above him became filled with ancient copper mirrors. The 3600 mirrors hung in the air, blocking the impending claw attacks and buying Ning just a tiny bit of time.

Swoosh!

Ning hurriedly used the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] technique to dodge more than a thousand kilometers away, leaving the jail 'cell' region.

“What a terrifying True God Ultrafish. It seems that the information I gained from soulscouring the other True Gods and True Immortals wasn't completely correct.” Ning stood outside the restrictive formation, filled with terror at the close call. This foe's claw-arts were absolutely terrifying; Ning had been badly injured in their very first clash, and the only reason he had been able to survive was because his own sword-arts were formidable as well. Otherwise, he would've instantly been ripped apart into tiny pieces.

Ning didn't just pick foes randomly; there was a plan behind it. He had soulscoured many prisoners and thus he knew a fair amount of information regarding the many True Gods and True Immortals of Pangaea.

Ning had mentally divided these True Gods and True Immortals into three different types.

The first type was comparable to an ordinary Daofather of the Three Realms.

The second type was comparable to a elite Daofather of the Three Realms.

The most powerful type was close to overlord-class Daofathers in power.

Most of these True God and True Immortal prisoners were at a fairly low level of insight into the Dao, with very few having gained insight into the Heavenly Daos. This was why most of them were merely comparable to ordinary Daofathers! Some, by relying on powerful divine abilities that

were as dominating as Ning's own [Starseizing Hand], were able to unleash the power of a elite Daofather. And some were like True God Ultrafish.

"True God Ultrafish...in the memories of the other True Gods and True Immortals, he was supposedly quite an ordinary True God with very ordinary divine abilities." Ning mused to himself, "I didn't expect that he would've reached the fifth stage in abyssforce; in terms of power, he should be comparable to a elite Daofather now."

Abyssforce wasn't that powerful in attacking, relatively speaking. If Ultrafish had reached the fifth stage in an offensively oriented type of power like swordforce, Ning probably would've been completely destroyed in their first exchange.

It really was true that True God Ultrafish's life experiences and luck had been average, resulting in him not being able to acquire any particularly powerful divine abilities. Otherwise, if he was able to use them in concert with his fifth-stage abyssforce, he would absolutely be close to an overlord-class Daofather in power.

"I need to be more careful," Ning mused to himself. "Although I do have the intelligence I gained from soulscouring those prisoners, they've all been trapped here for a very long period of time; it isn't strange that some of them may have made breakthroughs. Mm...in the future, each time I fight someone, I need to first use [Three Heads, Six Arms]; just now, if I had used that technique, I wouldn't have suffered so badly."

Ning had been so caught off-guard by the suddenly, unexpected danger that he didn't even have the time to activate the [Ninehorn Lightning Serpent] technique, to say nothing of [Three Heads, Six Arms].

[Three Heads, Six Arms] allowed him to manifest two more heads and four more arms with his divine power. This meant it needed time to activate, albeit just a tiny bit of time. By comparison, activating the [Starseizing Hand] was so fast as to be nearly instantaneous, requiring just a thought.

"Ahahaha...kid, is that all you have? And you want to make me submit?"

The tall, skinny old man laughed in an ugly manner. “You ran pretty fast just now, and your mirrors are quite bizarre as well. Otherwise, you would’ve lost your little life. You should feel lucky that you managed to witness my claw-arts and survive to tell the tale.”

“True God Ultrafish.” Ning actually chuckled. “Very good. Yet another powerful opponent for me.”

“Opponent?” The skinny old man laughed coldly, “You want to use me as a way to train yourself? Hmph. Careful that you don’t die from it.”

“I’ll be back.” Ning turned, transforming into a black lightning streak that quickly flew away.

“Hmph.” The tall, skinny old man watched coldly as Ning left. After Ning departed, he finally frowned “This Overseer has a pretty Immortal energy aura, but his divine power’s aura is clearly weaker than mine. Just now, I actually wasn’t able to kill him in one blow, and his sword-arts really were quite fast, even faster than my claw-arts. Was that a sword-art that has surpassed the Heavenly Daos? Where did he learn such a thing?”

.....

Ning felt happy whenever he encountered a powerful opponent. He could sense that he was continuously improving, and that he was gaining more and more insights into the sword-arts left behind by World God Northrest.

Ning continued his voyage through the prisonworld, battling True Gods all the way. Some True Gods, Ning could defeat. Some, Ning could just barely fight to a standstill. Whenever Ning encountered foes like these, he would immediately leave after a short battle. He would come back for them later.

There were also some who could completely suppress Ning in strength. In fact, there were some like True God Ultrafish who could very nearly kill Ning.

As for the most absolutely, monstrously talented True Gods who were

comparable to Elders Gods or overlord-class Daofathers in strength...Ning didn't even dare to touch them. He didn't have an Envoy on him right now; fighting such an opponent would be like courting death.

Of course, if he chose to focus on long-range attacks using his Daofather-level energy with his [Brightmoon] sword-art, he would definitely be able to match a elite Daofather in power. But Ning's goal here was to temper his sword-arts, which was why he focused on close combat, which his weakness right now.

Whoosh.

The True God's body was split in half and knocked flying away. Far off in the distance, the two halves joined together into a new whole.

"I lost." Yet another True God bent the knee to Ji Ning.

Ning reached out with his hand, placing it atop the True God's head. The True God did not try to fight back.

Ning quickly flipped through this person's memories, discarding all the useless ones in search of something that would benefit him. Although none of the previous soulscours had proved fruitful, Ning had never given up. So long as there was even a hint of a chance, he would continue in his current path.

"Eh?" Ning suddenly saw a seemingly ordinary memory, but was instantly stunned by it. Then...he revealed a look of joy.

"A Heavengazer Tower of Radiance?" Ning murmured to himself. "A treasure like this actually exists? How marvelous. The chaos-kingdom of Pangaea truly does have a much more powerful foundation than that of the Three Realms." Ning's pulserate began to quicken.

Heavengazer Towers were a type of Chaos treasure...and the type which Ning desperately needed right now. In truth, while soulscouring his defeated opponents, Ning had discovered quite a few treasures which he desired, but none of them existed within the prisonworld.

The Heavengazer Tower's owner, however...was imprisoned right here inside the prisonworld!

Chapter 33: Five Years Later

What did Ji Ning need the most right now?

He was in desperate need of more time!

His talent was beyond dispute. Even as a youth, Patriarch Lu and Subhuti had favored him. After experiencing so many things, he had only become an even more outstanding figure. An Immortal cultivator's talent wasn't something that was set in stone; it could change and transform as he grew up and experienced all sorts of events. Some might regress, while others might soar to the heavens and become increasingly dazzling.

Clearly, Ning was the type to become more and more dazzling...but even the most monstrous of geniuses needed time to grow!

Treasures that could change the rate at which time flowed...yes, they existed in the Three Realms. The Grand Xia Emperor, for example, had been able to use the Brightmoon Diagram of the Mountains and Rivers to change the flow of time within it! But this sort of temporal change used up an enormous amount of energy, even though the magic treasure itself was helping to facilitate it. Although the Xia Emperor was a Pure Yang True Immortal, he was only able to allow some weak Wanxiang-level children to experience a different rate of time. He wasn't capable of doing the same for Celestial Immortals.

Ning was an Empyrean God and True Immortal. To change the rate of time for him...even Subhuti and Daoist Three Purities would feel a headache if they had to come up with such an idea.

If Mother Nuwa was still around, she would be able to do it.

Mother Nuwa had created the Six Paths of Reincarnation. Time flowed at a much, much faster rate than normal in the region around the Bridge of Despair and the Six Paths of Reincarnation! Countless souls flowed into the place, but time continued to flow through the area at a terrifying pace without the need for any Immortals or Fiendgods to use up their energy to maintain it. This was because the Six Paths of Reincarnation were made perfectly; they used up very little energy, and the amount of

energy they absorbed from the outside world was more than enough to sustain themselves.

But the Six Paths of Reincarnation were a formation!

The Heavengazer Tower of Radiance was a magic treasure!

Inside the Heavengazer Tower, time was stably maintained at a rate that was ten times faster than that of the outside world. Ten years would pass inside for every year that passed outside. This was an extremely stable mechanism, and there was no need for any outside sources of energy. The treasure itself was a stable spacetime dimension of its own. Even True Gods, Daofathers, and World Gods could go inside it, and time would still flow at ten times the normal right.

In addition...

This magic treasure could also be used to accelerate the speed of time even further! However, if one wanted to go beyond the 'base' of ten times normal speed, one would have to use up some Immortal energy. In addition, the more powerful the user, the more energy would be used up in speeding up time for cultivation.

"A stable spacetime treasure," Ning marveled. "My master Subhuti was able to establish the Crescent world in a different fold of spacetime, but not even he would be able to forge such a stable spacetime treasure such as this."

Stable spacetime treasures were far too difficult to make. This was the only one Ning had ever heard of, and it was a Chaos treasure.

More than anything else, Ning needed time. The Heavengazer Tower was able to speed up time by a factor of ten, and if Ning was willing to use up some of his energy, it would be able to speed up time even faster. Most importantly of all...this treasure existed within the prisonworld. A True God was carrying it!

"True God Shiyu?" Ning frowned.

The possessor of the Heavengazer Tower was True God Shiyu.

This True God, however, could be said to be the most terrifyingly powerful True God in the entire prisonworld. Almost all of the True Gods and True Immortals imprisoned here knew of him, but very few knew that he was in possession of the Heavengazer Tower. Ning had soulscoured many True Gods and True Immortals, but he had only learned this bit of information now because the True God which Ning had just soulscoured had been one of True God Shiyu's subordinates.

"He's very hard to deal with. He's clearly just a True God, but he once battled against Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals. If you factor in the Heavengazer Tower, he has a total of three Chaos treasures," Ning mused to himself. "Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals...in the Three Realms, they would be considered overlords. In other words, he's at a level of power which is close to that of an overlord-class expert."

"Exhausting his energy reserves? That won't work either. He's at a very high level of enlightenment; he's one of the tiny handful of True Gods and True Immortals in the prisonworld who is able to draw energy from the primordial chaos," Ning mused to himself.

One had to have a certain degree of insights into the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos in order to be able to extract energy from it, but once this became possible, one would no longer have to worry about one's energy being used up.

All Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals were capable of this, but only a tiny number of True Gods and True Immortals were. True God Shiyu, however, was obviously one of them.

"What should I do? How should I deal with him?" Ning pondered to himself. "I put the Starseizing Manor in the Crescent world...but even if I went back there to gather the people I need for the Rahu Formation, I'll still be significantly weaker than someone of the overlord level of power."

Ning had fought against an overlord-class expert before. Daomother Devilhand, using just one hand, had been able to defeat Ning while he was in command of an Envoy. But of course, her attacks were considered extremely formidable even amongst other overlord-class Daofathers.

As for True God Shiyu, he was only able to stay alive in the face of attacks from Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals; in terms of raw power, he probably wasn't much stronger than Ning had been when controlling the Envoy.

"Perhaps, when my swordforce reaches the fifth stage, I'll have a chance of beating him," Ning mused to himself.

.....

Ning continued to battle his way through the prisonworld. He no longer solely fought against True Gods; he even began to act against the True Immortals as well.

He was constantly gaining insights into the mysteries behind the sword-arts left behind by World God Northrest in the hopes of reaching the fifth stage of heartforce as soon as possible.

However...

Although he was slowly improving nonstop, he still felt as though he was just a hairsbreadth away from reaching that stage. This sort of feeling was absolutely maddening. However, Ning was able to remain quite calm. He knew that so long as he continued to advance like this, sooner or later he would make his breakthrough.

.....

Time continued to flow on, day by day, month by month.

In the Three Realms.

Yet another great Realmwar was taking place now, this time on the Kingshill major world of the Zhuanxu Realm.

This was the second Realmwar to occur after the one in the Yellow Emperor Realm. In terms of size, it was considerably smaller than the Yellow Emperor Realmwar, but it was still far larger than many of the Realmwars that had come before it, such as the Crimsonbright Realmwar.

On the Nuwa Alliance's side, there was a total of more than eight

hundred Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.

On the Seamless Gate's side, there were six hundred Empyrean Gods and True Immortals, along with a supporting army of golems.

"It's hard to say who will win this Realmwar." Daofather Netherjade was standing atop a wall, staring off into the distance.

The black-robed Godking chuckled. "That's normal. The war for karmic luck inherently involves an element of luck as well. All we can ask for is for no more monsters like Ji Ning to appear out of nowhere."

"The Primordial Era gave birth to Houyi, while the Three Realms gave birth to Ji Ning. Enough already. If the Nuwa Alliance was to produce a third such monster, we should just go ahead and give the damn war up." Daofather Netherjade shook his head.

"Agreed. Houyi truly is terrifying." The black-robed Godking sighed. "I never heard anything about his axe-skills. Didn't he always use arrows in the past? Archery is a long-range form of combat, while axes are used in close combat. The difference between the two is enormous. How could he have become so powerful with a hatchet?"

"I heard that long ago, Houyi tried to chop down the divine osmanthus tree of the Lunar Star." Daofather Netherjade chuckled. "That osmanthus tree isn't so easily chopped down. Anyone capable of chopping it down would probably be capable of annihilating the entire Lunar Star. I've always heard that Subhuti's eldest disciple spent all of his days chopping down trees as a woodcutter. Now, it seems, it was because Houyi has never given up on chopping down that osmanthus tree."

"But I'm worried..." Daofather Netherjade frowned. "Houyi's greatest talent always lay in his arrows. If he's that powerful with the hatchet... how powerful have his arrows become?"

"Exactly. He's going to be trouble. If his archery skills are too formidable, when the Endwar erupts, most likely only uncle-master Everwood or the Fiendlord would be able to withstand him," the black-robed Godking sighed.

“Right.” Daofather Netherjade nodded, then sighed again. “Even though it is true that the Endwar is rapidly approaching...I have to admit, Ji Ning is every bit the monster that Houyi was. In fact, he’s grown at an even more astonishing level of speed. In just a few short centuries, he’s mastered a sword-art that surpasses the Heavenly Daos. A peerless, monstrous Sword Immortal like him...if he’s given a few thousand years, it’s hard to imagine how powerful he will become. He would probably become another Houyi.”

The black-robed Godking nodded.

In the past, he had never truly cared about Ji Ning, but the battle at the Deerchaser world and the sight of Ji Ning clashing against Daomother Devilhand had truly caused the Godking to feel nervous. He had to admit...Ji Ning’s potential was downright horrifying.

.....

Within Prisonworld 17, located inside the stone stele that had been placed inside the gorge of that frozen star in the primordial chaos.

Five years had passed in the blink of an eye.

It had been five years since his ‘assassination’. Ning had come to this world, determined to temper himself through battle, and he had.

Atop a beautiful grassland, there was an absolutely dazzling shrine that seemed to have been carved out of pure jade. Inside the jade shrine, a white-robed youth was seated in the lotus position, his eyes closed.

Rumble...

A surge of power, birthed from the essence of the sword and located in the deepest recesses of the primordial chaos, began to flow to this location.

An indescribably arcane and profound aura began to swirl in the area around Ning, a terrifying, heart-stopping aura that belonged to the essence of the sword.

Slowly, Ning’s very body began to emanate with dazzling, rainbow-

colored sword-light. It was as though Ning himself had become transformed into an utterly terrifying sword.

Chapter 34: Swordforce, Stage Five

Ji Ning's eyes were closed.

The many insights he had gained into the sword were continuously merging together. It was like mist being condensed. Finally, with a boom, the mist completely condensed into a 'seed', a seed surrounded by a faint aura of sword-ki. This sword-ki seed was the complete crystallization of all of Ning's insights into the essence of the sword. It was something which he could sense in his heart.

It wasn't something that could be seen with the naked eye. It was something that could only be seen and sensed by the heart.

This sword-seed had been planted within Ning's heart.

"Whew." Ning let out a soft breath, then opened his eyes.

The jade shrine had become quiet and peaceful once more. The rainbow-colored sword-light surrounding Ning had vanished as well, and Ning now looked as ordinary as ever. However, his eyes dimly shone with a sharpness that struck fear in the hearts of others.

"When one's insights into the sword crystallize into a seed, it will naturally gain a soul of its own," Ning murmured softly to himself.

Thanks to the guidance of World God Northrest, Ning knew exactly what a Sword Immortal's path would be like.

The fifth stage of swordforce, 'Sword God'. When one's insights into the essence of the sword reached an extremely high level, after one broke the final bottleneck a Dao-seed would naturally be formed. Plant seeds would have to sprout before they could grow, and the same was true for this Dao-seed, which naturally had the aura of the true essence of the sword. In fact, Ning's every punch and kick would now contain the tremendous power of fifth-stage swordforce, which was the dazzling, rainbow-colored light that had surrounded him earlier.

"I've finally reached the Sword God stage." Ning stretched out his middle finger, thrusting it forward as he could a sword. Rumble...

instantly, rainbow-colored sword-light emerged from his finger and swirled around it.

The rainbow sword-light was incomparably agile, filled with a transcendent aura of sharpness.

It felt as though it could cut through all things as easily as rotten wood!

It was utterly unshakable and unbreakable.

This...this was the sword!

“No wonder it is this difficult to reach the fifth stage of swordforce. If it wasn’t for the Nine Chaos Seals, the assistance of the stone steles, and all those True God and True Immortal sparring partners, I can’t even imagine how long it would’ve taken for me to break through.” Only after making the breakthrough did he truly sense and understand how different the Sword God stage was.

In this moment, Ning understood that the path of the sword was a far longer one than he had imagined. Even World God Northrest was merely a traveler on that path.

“Good. The more powerful the path is, the better. If there was a limit to it, it would be boring.” Ning rose to his feet, walking out of the jade shrine and staring at the stone sword-steles outside. “I’ve just barely reached the Sword God stage; I need to carefully stabilize myself at this new level of power. Next, I’ll once more ponder on the sword-arts which World God Northrest left behind, so as to incorporate them into my [Brightmoon].”

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It had instantly become much easier for Ning to meditate on the stone sword-steles. Many things which had previously puzzled him had become clear, and his understanding of the sword continued to rise.

He was fusing all of these insights into his own [Brightmoon] sword-art! The [Brightmoon] sword-art was the representation of all of Ning’s insights into the sword, and he had infused it with everything he knew.

This meditation session ended up lasting for three months.

Whoosh. Ning was wielding a Darknorth sword in his hands, gently twirling it around.

Rainbow sword-light flowed over its surface, making it seem so dreamlike that it looked as though it was a series of illusions, making it hard to discern with clarity. This was the new 'Shadowless' stance of the [Brightmoon] sword-art.

"It'll be hard for me to improve any further in a short amount of time," Ning mused to himself. "True God Shiyu possesses the Heavengazer Tower of Radiance; no matter what, I have to acquire that treasure. Given enough time, I'll be able to grow even more powerful. However, prior to battling against him...I should first use other experts to further temper my sword-arts."

Sword-arts could only be truly perfected through combat, through trial by battle.

If one completely focused on meditating, perhaps one might reach a high level of insight, but one's actual combat ability would be flawed.

"Who should I choose to test my sword out? Mm..." Ning suddenly smiled. "Him."

.....

A wizened old man was seated in the lotus position atop a desolate grassland.

"Eh?" He suddenly raised his head, glancing at the white-robed youth that had just appeared in the skies far above him. The white-robed youth was charging down towards him.

"The Overseer?" The skinny old man revealed a hint of cold amusement. "He actually dares to return to my place?"

Swoosh.

The white-robed youth landed on the ground, just a few hundred meters away from the skinny old man. He was now located deep within the

restrictive formation, and the skinny old man would be able to attack him at any time.

“Long time no see.” Ning looked at him.

“It’s only been five years. I’ve barely had enough time to shut my eyes, but you’ve come back again.” The skinny old man shook his head. “Your Immortal energy truly is astoundingly vast, and you would be able to withstand my power if you controlled magic treasures to fight from afar. You wouldn’t be able to actually do anything to me, but it would be equally hard for me to kill you. I think you should leave. I don’t want to waste more of my divine power.”

This old man was True God Ultrafish, the one who had nearly killed Ning five years ago.

Whoosh. Whoosh. A pair of swords appeared in Ning’s hands.

“Eh?” The skinny old man’s face changed. He smirked. “You want to fight me in close combat again? You?”

“Yes. Me.” As soon as Ning’s words came out, he immediately charged forward.

The skinny old man was instantly enraged. He was a prisoner here, after all, and so he was extremely sparing in his use of energy. Every time he used up a bit of energy, his lifespan in the prisonworld was reduced correspondingly. He could tell that this Overseer would be quite powerful in controlling magic treasures, and so he really didn’t even wish to fight. However, this Overseer was so wildly arrogant as to actually engage him in close combat again?

“Since he wishes to die, I’ll send him on the path to oblivion.” Although the old man could guess that the Overseer had probably made some sort of a breakthrough, he felt that the breakthrough couldn’t amount to much. It had only been five years. How big of a breakthrough could it be?

Boom! Boom!

The two instantly began to clash against each other.

“That’s all the power you have? How dare you come back again!” The skinny old man bellowed.

Their two shadows flickered as fast as lightning as sword-light clashed against claw-light.

“You really have improved a bit...but it is useless. Although your sword is fast, your power is too weak. If you were to become a True God, you might have a chance of beating me, but for now? You are far from that level.” The skinny old man assaulted Ning with both his words and his attacks, but he remained unable to defeat Ning.

Ning was extremely calm.

He had completely suppressed and withdrawn his rainbow sword-light! Its power was simply too great; he’d be able to easily defeat his foe, which wasn’t the result he wished for. He had come here to further temper his sword-arts, allowing them to grow and be improved. Naturally, Ning had chosen to suppress his rainbow sword-light, completely relying on the intricacies of the [Brightmoon] sword-art and his divine power as a half-step True God to fight this foe.

Even though he didn’t use the rainbow sword-light, his [Brightmoon] sword-art was now far more profound than before, and so he was able to stave off this foe.

“Break, break, break!” The skinny old man fought with utterly wild abandon, and his fifth-stage abyssforce was extraordinarily powerful, but he remained unable to break apart Ning’s sword-arts.

“His sword is too fast, faster than the limits of the Heavenly Daos. Now, it has become even more mysterious and unpredictable than before, and his techniques have become even more skillful. Although I have the upper hand, I’m actually unable to defeat him.” The skinny old man grew frantic. “If this continues, my divine power will be depleted soon. Although I have Immortal energy as well, I merely have a second-tier Jindan as a Ki Refiner; I’ll be much weaker than I am now in close combat.”

The two continued to battle furiously. As more time passed, the old man

grew increasingly frantic.

“It’s about time.” Ning could no longer see anything new coming from the old man’s claw-arts, making this fight no longer useful to him. The Darknorth sword in his hands instantly flashed with the colors of the rainbow.

“The Sword God stage?” The skinny old man called out in shock.

Ning’s sword, covered with a layer of rainbow swordforce, instantly increased in power by a tremendous amount, becoming even more powerful than the old man’s claw-arts!

Slash!

The sword-light drifted outwards, knocking aside the old man’s claws and slicing out in a solitary, ghostly arc through the old man’s body. The old man’s body fell apart into two pieces, then rapidly reformed once more. The old man stared in blank shock at Ning.

“True God Ultrafish...are you willing to submit?” Ning looked at him.

True God Ultrafish stared blankly at him for a long moment, then lowered his head. “I submit.”

True God Ultrafish was never the arrogant, prideful type as he had a very ordinary status in the chaos-kingdom of Pangaea. It was only because he had been imprisoned here for a very long period of time that he had managed to break through to reach the fifth stage of abyssforce, resulting in his power increasing dramatically. However, he had long ago grown accustomed to bowing his head before greater powers. He was accustomed to submitting.

“I defeated a True God who reached the fifth stage of abyssforce, just like that.” Ning’s face was calm, but he felt great excitement in his heart.

This was absolutely the power of a elite Daofather.

He hadn’t used any formations, nor had he used an Envoy. He had merely used his own close combat skills to defeat his opponent.

The term Sword God, in and of itself, represented a group of utterly

terrifying figures. The former number one assassin of the Seamless Gate, the deceased Swordfather Darklight, had also reached the fifth stage of swordforce. The awe-inspiringly famous Daofather Fujū, who had been possessed by World God Northrest, had also reached the fifth stage of swordforce. And now, Ji Ning had reached the fifth stage of swordforce as well, and he had also mastered the [Five Treasures] sword-art.

Fifth-stage swordforce, paired with techniques that surpassed the limits of the Heavenly Daos...this was undoubtedly the most terrifyingly powerful sword-art that existed in the Three Realms.

His sword-arts were now even more terrifying than Swordfather Darklight's had been!

If the current Ji Ning was once more ambushed as he had been a few years ago, Ning could've blocked Swordfather Darklight's ambushing attack head-on!

Chapter 35: True God Shiyu

“Although I’ve grown much more powerful, compared to the leaders of Buddhism and Daoism, I’m still rather lacking. The Endwar is coming. The more powerful I become, the better. The Heavengazer Tower of Radiance...I have to acquire it.” Although Ji Ning desperately desired this treasure, he first still carefully meditated on the insights he had gained from his fight with True God Ultrafish, reflecting on what had happened in that fight.

Three days after his battle against True God Ultrafish, Ning finally set off for True God Shiyu’s region.

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A beautiful mountain gorge, filled with flowers and grass. A silver-haired man was here, attending to the flowers.

Whoosh.

A black lightning serpent flew towards him from far away, instantly arriving in the air above him.

“Eh?” The silver-haired man raised his head, giving it a glance. He saw a white-robed youth descending towards him from the heavens.

“So you are the new Overseer?” The silver-haired man looked puzzledly at Ning.

“True God Shiyu, you actually have the energy and presence of mind to be a gardener?” Ning said, “Almost all of the primordial chaos energy in this prisonworld is being refined and distilled into chaos nectar. All of the Elder Gods, Ancestral Immortals, and supreme True Gods and True Immortals are doing their best to absorb energy from what little primordial chaos remains. You only have access to a small amount of it, and yet you actually use it to take care of these flowers.”

The environment in the prisonworld was rather stark and grim. It was a world of perpetual dusk. Here in True God Shiyu’s gorge, however, there were fragrant flowers located everywhere. It was completely different

from the region outside the thousand kilometer restrictive formation keeping him here. Clearly, it was True God Shiyu who was taking care of these flowers.

“If my guess is correct, those Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals are all using the energy they absorb from the primordial chaos to maintain their estate-world treasures. Their estate-world treasures contain a world inside of them with many living creatures, and so the Ancestral Immortals and Elder Gods have sent their minds and their incarnations into those worlds, roaming through them and experiencing the vicissitudes of life.” True God Shiyu laughed softly. “But...that’s the behavior of a weakling.”

Ning was startled.

“Now that they’ve been imprisoned here, they’ve lost all their motivation and willpower; all they care about is enjoying life.” True God Shiyu laughed coldly.

“Their actions aren’t exactly wrong.” Ning shook his head. “They have been imprisoned here for countless years. How many would be willing to endure such loneliness for so long? If they can’t endure it, why shouldn’t they go and enjoy life in another world?”

“Weaklings.” True God Shiyu let out a cold laugh. “They have completely given up on escaping this place.”

“Oh? You haven’t given up?” Ning looked at him.

“I’ve never given up. I train in infiniforce and taiji-force; I only need to break through to the sixth stage in one of them and I’ll be able to break these shackles. In fact, I’ll be able to break apart this entire prisonworld as I regain my freedom.” True God Shiyu didn’t try to hide it at all. All of the Immortals and Fiendgods imprisoned here, Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals included, hoped to make a critical breakthrough and shatter their fetters, then break apart the prisonworld and leave.

“If you were to reach the sixth stage, you would be at the World-class of power.” Ning nodded. “That would indeed be possible. But...you’ve been imprisoned here for a very long period of time.”

“Nearly five chaos cycles.” True God Shiyu nodded, staring at Ning. “I know what you are going to say. You are going to say, if a person is unable to break through to the World-level within one chaos cycle, it will be forever impossible for them to make that breakthrough. Am I right?”

Ning looked at him. This was common knowledge.

After searching through many memories of the prisoners of Pangaea, he had learned many things. Ning had also learned many bits of common knowledge from the information imparted to him by World God Northrest. If a person wasn't able to reach the World-level within a single chaos cycle, it was virtually impossible for him to succeed for the rest of his life.

“But there are no absolutes in life. There's always a chance.” True God Shiyu gritted his teeth as he stared at Ning.

Ning nodded. It was true. There really were no absolutes!

For example, perhaps someone only didn't make that breakthrough because his cultivation techniques were too poor, or because he didn't have a good teacher. He might spend multiple chaos cycles of painstaking work to become a 'mere' Elder God. However, once he gained detailed information regarding a top-tier cultivation technique or guidance from a World-class expert, he might quickly break through to the next stage and become a World God himself.

Or perhaps an Elder God or Ancestral Immortal might experience an unexpected event that would allow a breakthrough to be made.

In short...there was always a chance of a lucky stroke of fate!

None of the major powers of the Three Realms had access to truly top-notch cultivation techniques, and none of them had been guided by particularly powerful figures. Houyi was a good example. Although he had been alive for more than a chaos cycle, he had trained painstakingly on his own and developed his heartforce technique all by himself, as well as his archery techniques. If he was given truly top-tier techniques or had the guidance of Vastheaven Palace, however, it was entirely possible that he would've broken through to become a World God by now.

“Here in the prisonworld, True God Shiyu has no one to provide him with tutelage, and he won’t have any lucky encounters either. It has been nearly five chaos cycles, but he still wishes to reach the World-level? It really is almost impossible.” Ning couldn’t help but secretly sigh to himself.

“I’ve come here for just one reason.” Ning looked at him.

“Speak.” True God Shiyu looked at Ning calmly. He didn’t hold this Overseer in any regard at all.

“Your Heavengazer Tower of Radiance,” Ning said.

True God Shiyu’s face changed. He stared at Ning, then let out a cold laugh. “You actually know about the Heavengazer Tower, eh? What, you want me to give you a Chaos treasure? You? A trifling Overseer? Your only job is to watch over this prisonworld. You should just f*ck off and stop bothering me.” He couldn’t even be bothered to waste words with Ning. How could he hand over such a precious treasure to someone else?

“If that’s the case, I’ll have no choice but to fight you.” A pair of swords appeared in Ning’s hands.

“You’d actually dare to assault me?” True God Shiyu was shocked. “Y-you...you aren’t a member of Pangaea?”

The chaos-kingdom of Pangaea would generally send Celestial Immortals with first-tier Jindans to be Overseers. How would a Celestial Immortal possibly dare to attack him?

“Pangaea has been destroyed.” Ning held his swords in his hands. “This prisonworld is now under my control, and you are my prisoner. I don’t wish to kill you, but you WILL hand over the Heavengazer Tower to me.”

“In your dreams.” True God Shiyu snapped back in a frozen voice.

“Then we’ll simply have to fight it out.”

Swoosh.

Ning’s words still echoed in the gorge, but his lightning-fast streak of sword-light had already reached True God Shiyu. It was the fastest stance

of Ning's [Brightmoon] sword-art: Blood Drop stance!

"What a fast sword!" True God Shiyu was shocked. He no longer dared to be brash, and he produced a pair of short cudgels in his hands as well. The cudgel glowed with golden light, and the head of the cudgel had a triangular shape to it that seemed incredibly sharp.

Clang!

True God Shiyu's twin cudgels had manifested the faint outline of an enormous Taiji diagram before him, blocking Ning's sword-attack. After doing so, he suddenly spun his twin cudgels, transforming the Taiji diagram into an orb of black light and sending it smashing towards Ning with frenzied might.

Boom! Ning's own sword-light transformed into a pair of black holes as he used the Soleheart stance to block. He could sense an incomparably savage and bizarre surge of energy smash against him, and he couldn't help but be knocked flying backwards.

"What tremendous power." Ning landed on the ground, stunned. He immediately understood that True God Shiyu had to have trained in some sort of special divine ability that was akin to Ning's own [Starseizing Hand], an ability that allowed him to explosively increase his power. In fact, it was possible that his divine ability was even more powerful than the [Starseizing Hand]; otherwise, there was no way the twin cudgels could have produced such enormous power.

The distant True God Shiyu had a solemn look on his face as well. He stared at Ning, not daring to be overconfident. He said softly, "What a fast sword. It has surpassed the limits of the Heavenly Daos? A pity that it won't be of use."

"Is that so?" Ning's body blurred momentarily, then two more heads and four more arms grew out of him, allowing him to wield a total of six swords.

"Hmph." In response, True God Shiyu manifested a total of six arms as well. He now wielded six cudgels, but four of them had noticeably weaker auras than the original two.

The two once more began to clash against each other at full power. As they did so, True God Shiyu felt even more shocked, because this time Ning used the Blood Drop stance, Shadowless stance, and Heavenbreaker stance in succession. The most dangerous attack for True God Shiyu was the Shadowless stance, as it was both fast and incredibly unpredictable, making it extremely difficult for him to block.

Those six swords worked together in harmony, unleashing those three mighty sword stances in a series of berserk attacks. Although True God Shiyu's divine ability was formidable, he still had to fight in an extremely cautious manner.

The two continued to fight for quite a long period of time.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The flowers and the grass in the area around the gorge had long ago been reduced to dust, but True God Shiyu couldn't spare the attention to worry about them. Although he had spent considerable time on these flowers, they were nothing more than a way for him to relieve the loneliness in his heart. He wasn't willing to waste the energy needed to maintain an entire world, and so he used a comparatively much lower amount of energy to maintain a garden.

"It's useless. Your sword-arts are indeed powerful; in fact, I admit that they are extremely powerful. I roamed the chaos-kingdom of Pangaea for countless years, and I've met more True Gods and True Immortals than I can count. However, I've see no one with sword-arts which can compare to yours. Sword God stage sword-arts which are faster than the limits of the Heavenly Daos...and yet, your divine body is far too weak, and your divine abilities are too ordinary." True God Shiyu's voice echoed within the gorge.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

The two collided once more, with both being knocked flying backwards.

Ning came to a halt. Staring at True God Shiyu, he said in a low voice, "It seems I'll still have to rely on long-range attacks."

“Long-range attacks?” True God Shiyu was stunned.

Thirty-six Swords of the Heavens suddenly appeared around Ning, and an enormous torrent of Daofather-level energy began to flow through them.

Chapter 36: Two Methods

The swords were filled with Ji Ning's Daofather-level energy, causing each of them to emanate auras of blinding might. This caused True God Shiyu's face to change as he became even more solemn. "It seems this Overseer's abilities as a Ki Refiner are even better than his abilities in close combat."

"Go."

The distant midair Ji Ning waved his finger.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! The Swords of the Heavens instantly soared out like streaks of light, striking towards True God Shiyu from every direction. They didn't move that fast, not even surpassing the limits of the Heavenly Daos; their speed was something which True God Shiyu could handle. However, as soon as the thirty six Swords of the Heavens closed in on True God Shiyu, they suddenly sped up dramatically, accelerating past the limits of the Heavenly Daos. Each of them moved in bewildering, mysterious ways as well, as all of them were using the Shadowless stance of the [Brightmoon] sword-art.

The [Brightmoon] sword-art which Ning created had a total of five stances, each of which had its own will and intent. Ning designed them to have unlimited potential; so long as Ning himself could grow stronger, they could continue to be perfected.

Swish swish swish! True God Shiyu was in a three-headed, six-armed form, and the six cudgels in his hands swept out in streaks of light. True God Shiyu seemed to have become an enormous Taiji diagram, capable of blocking all assaults.

"Eh?" Ning frowned. His long-range attacks were somewhat more powerful than his close-range attacks, yet he still remained unable to injure his foe.

"I refuse to believe you can keep blocking my attacks." Controlled by Ning's soul heartforce technique, the thirty-six Swords of the Heavens attacked even more frenetically as he put all sorts of dazzling, arcane

sword-arts on display. When they struck in unison, they seemed to encompass all types of sword-arts...but True God Shiyu just focused completely on defense, his six cudgels forming a simply flawless, impregnable defense.

“Hahaha...”

True God Shiyu continued to block while roaring with laughter. “Overseer, have you heard? In the past, I battled multiple times against Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals, but they were unable to do anything to me. Compared to them, you are even weaker.”

“When we first started to fight, your sword-arts really did give me a bad scare! Hah! But although your sword is rather fast, it’s still within the realm of what I can handle. Even if I just used two arms, I’d be able to defend against you, to say nothing of using six.” As True God Shiyu spoke, he actually dispelled four of his arms, returning to his normal appearance and wielding just two cudgels.

The two cudgels worked together in a truly flawless manner, like Yin and Yang coming together. His defense was completely airtight, and the faint image of an enormous Taiji diagram completely covered him.

Ning had an ugly look on his face. “How come...”

“I was quite cautious when we first started to fight. But now, it seems, you haven’t reached a level of power comparable to Elder Gods or Ancestral Immortals yet. If I simply focus on defense, I don’t even need to use my full power.” True God Shiyu said calmly, “I don’t need to use any divine abilities at all. We can just keep fighting like this, and I’ll keep absorbing energy from the primordial chaos here. I can fight like this very a long, long time.”

Ning knew this as well. If he could force the man to use divine abilities, the man wouldn’t be able to keep it up for too long. Ning would be able to use his long-range attacks and spirit-pills to slowly exhaust the man...but now, it seemed, True God Shiyu’s defense was utterly unshakable. If he didn’t attack and instead focused solely on defense, he would be able to defend against Ning’s attacks without using any divine abilities at all.

“Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals have better abilities than you and greater power as well.” True God Shiyu said calmly, “But my taiji-force and infiniforce have both reached the fifth stage, and I’ve merged them together into a perfect whole. I can survive attacks from Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals and escape to tell the tale. You? You aren’t even close.”

Elder Gods had divine bodies that were far more powerful than the bodies of True Gods. Their bodies alone ensured that they would have close to the power of an overlord-class expert.

Ancestral Immortals with first-tier Jindans were far more powerful than the Daofathers of the Three Realms. They were equivalent to Elder Gods, and the weakest of them would be close to the overlord level as well.

The overlord level...

This was a clear, dividing line within the Three Realms.

To be at the overlord level meant that one had to have reached the Elder God level of power. Elder Gods were generally born at this level of power, with Mother Nuwa being an example. She had also been born with mastery over the Heavenly Dao of Life. She had then mastered the Heavenly Daos of Yin and Yang, then the Heavenly Daos of the Five Elements of Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, and Earth. This ensured that even amongst Elder Gods, she was at the absolute peak of power.

This was why Mother Nuwa had been the number one figure of the Primordial Era, superior to the other Elder Gods and the leaders of Daoism and Buddhism!

In the Seamless Gate, the only one who was a match for her had been the Lord of the Demonheart. Although Daomother Devilhand had been able to fight Mother Nuwa one-on-one, that was just in a short clash. She was still considerably weaker than Mother Nuwa.

The Lord of All Fiends was also born an Elder God, but his fleeing skills were superior to that of a World God’s! From this, one could see how formidable he was.

True God Shiyu, in turn, was able to escape the clutches of a number of Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals. From this, one could see how terrifyingly perfect his fusion of taiji-force infiniforce was. And of course, True God Shiyu had other divine abilities which could allow him to unleash incredibly mighty amounts of power. When matched with his taiji-force and infiniforce, it allowed him to withstand even Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals for a brief period of time.

“Hmph.” Ning assaulted him furiously for a short while longer, then unwillingly came to a halt.

“It seems that although I can suppress him in power and force him to focus on defense, I’m still just ‘close’ to the overlord level of power. True God Shiyu specializes in defense. Beating him will be very difficult.” Ning pondered to himself. “But I still have to acquire the Heavengazer Tower of Radiance as quickly as possible. If too much time passes, the Endwar might begin. By then, acquiring the Heavengazer Tower will be pointless.”

The whole reason why he desperately needed the tower was because the Endwar was coming soon.

“To grow much more powerful in a short period of time...” Ning pondered to himself. “There are two methods.”

“The first method is to become a True God. Once I become a True God... given the power of the [Taowu Eighteen Fiendgods] and the [One True Body] techniques, I’ll essentially be half a step into the Elder God realm of power. Although I’ll still be physically weaker than actual Elder Gods, my sword-arts should ensure that I’m no weaker than an ordinary Elder God. By then, I should be at the overlord level of power. Although True God Shiyu was able to defend against Elder Gods and Ancestral Immortals, that was just for a short period of time before he fled. He’s trapped here in the prisonworld with nowhere to run. If we really were to get into a fight...once I am at the overlord level of power, he would definitely lose.”

“But...”

“To actually become a True God...” Ning frowned.

Technically speaking, he should’ve already fulfilled all the necessary requirements for breaking through to become a True God long ago.

The first requirement was to have a perfect divine body, and his body had reached that level long ago. The second was to have mastered a Grand Dao, and Ning had mastered three of them already; the Grand Dao of Lightning, the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop, and the Grand Dao of the Sword.

“According to the [Solitary World God], I’ll need to find a spark of inspiration from within the midst of endless solitude. Once I find it, I’ll be able to make my breakthrough.”

“That...sounds incredibly opaque and mysterious. Ugh...the most important thing needed for the [Solitary World God] is time. The thing I lack the most is also time.” Ning shook his head.

The critical part of training in this technique lay in the word ‘solitary’. Once one actually began to cultivate in it, one would sit there without moving whatsoever, just like a solitary, withered tree. Only then would one be able to find that necessary spark of insight. This technique generally needed a great deal of time.

“The second method is to use Violetjewel,” Ning mused to himself. “Violetjewel was the most important weapon owned by World God Northrest, and it is powerful enough that it would cause Chaos Immortals and World Gods to go crazy over it. According to what World God Northrest said, so long as I can repair even just the surface layer of the weapon, its power will vastly surpass that of any Chaos treasures. If I can use this weapon, my power will dramatically increase as well.”

“By comparison...my chances of repairing Violetjewel in time are probably better.” Ning nodded to himself.

He had already repaired the surface of Violetjewel by roughly 20%. Now, he had reached the fifth stage of swordforce. Although he was unable to defeat True God Shiyu, Shiyu was known to be one of the most powerful and most troublesome Gods of the entire prisonworld. The other True

Gods should be much easier to deal with.

He could sweep through all of them, acquire their treasures, and then use them to repair Violetjewel's surface layer.

"Then let's begin."

After pondering for a moment, Ning flew out of the gorge in the form of a black lightning serpent, disappearing into the horizon.

True God Shiyu watched as Ning left, a cold look in his eyes. "He wants to take my treasures? I have three Chaos treasures on me. If I didn't have a few tricks up my sleeves, others would've taken those treasures from me long ago. Ugh...damn the fact that I'm imprisoned here and have nowhere to run." Aside from being skilled in defense, he was also skilled in fleeing...but alas, he was now shackled and had nowhere to run.

As for Ning, he began to act against the True Gods and True Immortals of the prisonworld on a large scale. There were far fewer True Gods and True Immortals here than there were Empyrean Gods and Celestial Immortals. Thus, Ning prized every one of them. After every battle, he would immediately meditate on any new insights he felt he had gained, so as to gain the most benefit possible from these battles.

Chapter 37: The Bloodlotus Blooms

Some True Gods and True Immortals were much weaker than Ji Ning. They only had the power of an ordinary Daofather, and so Ji Ning was able to easily defeat them. He didn't even gain many insights from battling them, only spending a few hours in meditation afterwards.

After battling the more powerful ones or the ones who had some special abilities, Ning might spend seven or eight days carefully reflecting on their battle.

Twelve months after Ning began his sweep through the prisonworld. He was within a region filled with dark fog where a True Immortal was kept prisoner. Boom! Boom! Boom! The sounds of a major battle could be heard booming out from within the fog, causing the fog itself to roil and roll about.

Within the fog.

"Go!" The seemingly berserk violet-eyed woman pointed towards Ning, causing a sky filled with black light to shoot towards Ning

Ning held his twin swords in his hands, slowly stepping through the air and advancing.

He was in no rush to attack his opponent. He just slowly advanced through the air, giving his opponent plenty of time to attack him.

Although collecting enough treasures to repair Violetjewel was important, his own personal skill and power was his true foundation of strength. He had to treat every battle against these True Gods and True Immortals seriously.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Ning's sword-light fluctuated in an unpredictable manner. He even used his attacking stance, 'Shadowless', to defend against all the enemy's attacks. From this, one could tell how transcendent his sword-arts had become and how vastly superior he was compared to his foe.

"Is that your ultimate attack?" Ning continued to stroll forward as he

spoke.

The violet-eyed woman's face was ashen. She growled out, "Come back."

Whoosh. Instantly, the countless streaks of black light flew back to her and entered her body. Only then did her face recover a bit of color.

"You are far more powerful than me. If you want me to submit, I'll submit." The violet-eyed woman came to this decision in a straightforward manner.

"A hundred and ninety-two." Ning nodded and murmured softly to himself.

The violet-eyed woman was stunned. What did the Overseer mean by mumbling that number?

"Alright." Ning pondered for a moment. "I've swept through a hundred and ninety-two of the True Gods and True Immortals of the prisonworld. That's more than half of them. That should be enough treasures to repair the surface layer of Violetjewel."

All the treasures he had acquired from the Celestial Immortals and Empyrean Gods here, combined with a few treasures from True Gods and True Immortals, had only been able to repair a fifth of the surface damage to Violetjewel.

This time, he had collected far more treasures. It was most likely enough.

"Time to give it a try." Ning immediately made the decision to temporarily stop his campaign and instead go give repairing Violetjewel a try.

But of course, before he went to repair Violetjewel, he still had to finish what he came here to do.

Ning reached out with his hand, letting it rest upon the head of the violet-eyed woman. Ning was going to search through the memories of every single True God and True Immortal. Perhaps he might find some information which might be of some help to him.

.....

Next to a beautiful lake.

The white-robed youth, Ji Ning, landed on the ground next to it. With a wave of his hand, he caused the jade shrine to appear on the grassy banks of the lake. The enormous stone sword-steles landed next, followed by the 3600 enormous Goldstar Beads of the Heavens that surrounded everything.

Ning then stepped into the jade shrine, seated himself on the prayer mat, then began his meditations.

After each battle, he would carefully reflect on every single thing he had seen.

Although he had decided to go repair Violetjewel after this battle, he still chose to first calmly meditate on the battle he had just experienced.

Time slowly flowed on...

Ning just sat there quietly in the lotus position. A full day later, he opened his eyes, rose to his feet, then walked outside the shrine.

He was in quite a good mood right now. In the past year or so, his sword-arts had continued to slowly improve a bit, and he had now acquired enough treasures to be able to repair Violetjewel. With Violetjewel in hand, he would probably be at the overlord level of power. Even though he might a bit lacking compared to those elder figures who had long ago reached this level of power, the difference wouldn't be as great as it had been in the past.

"The Nine chaos Seals." Ning's gaze fell upon the nearby goldstar beads, each roughly ten meters tall right now. The goldstar beads were covered with the complicated flowing runes of the Nine Chaos Seals, which continued to change and transform with every moment in a pattern which was never repeated.

Ning had a smile on his face, and he continued to look at the beads in quite a fine mood.

“Eh?” Suddenly...

Ning felt a tremor in his heart. He stared closely at the constantly changing runes.

He stared unblinkingly at the runes for a full hour...and then he sat down on the grass and immediately shut his eyes.

After sitting there meditating on the grass for nearly a day, Ning opened his eyes.

“Arise.” Ning willed it.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! The 3600 goldstar beads all rose into the air in a massive, dazzling, dense array. They hung high in the air like the stars in the sky. Ning’s powerful Immortal energy quickly filled every single goldstar bead. Then, he imposed his will upon them, causing them to rapidly transform. The aura of every single goldstar bead began to grow in power. In fact, every single goldstar bead seemed to grow to become more powerful than top-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures before the strengthening process ceased.

“I’ve finally completely mastered the third chaos seal,” Ning murmured softly to himself.

“Eh?”

His subconscious had suddenly connected to a place that was infinitely distant from Ning. It was beyond space, beyond time, beyond distance itself. In the past, Ning had never sensed this place before. Now that he had mastered the third chaos seal, his powerful heartforce, assisted by the chaos seals, was allowing him to vaguely sense it.

“Kill.”

“Kill.”

“Kill.”

This was a place that was filled with an aura of boundless murder and death. It was infinitely far away from him, but just sensing the place caused Ning’s heart to shudder...and at the same time, the aura seemed to

stir that killing intent that Ning had buried deep in his own heart, the killing aura that stemmed from his hatred of the Seamless Gate and his desire to kill the Godking.

Ning's eyes turned completely red upon being struck by this surge of killing intent. His veins began to protrude out from his body, which was trembling. Even with Ning's skill in heartforce, it took a long time for him to calm down.

What he didn't know was that different people would experience different things upon mastering the third chaos seal. For example, when Ning had been roaming the mortal world, he had mastered the second chaos seal and gained insight into the workings of fate, causing him to become much more attuned to it. Now, his heart had become filled with a desire to kill, and his heartforce was also extremely strong, which was why he became attuned to the essence of slaughter.

"Huff. Huff." Ning panted as he slowly calmed down...but as he did, he became even calmer than before.

He stared at the 3600 goldstar beads hovering in the air. At present, the goldstar beads...had already transformed into many closed blood-colored lotus buds.

The thirty-six hundred blood-colored lotus buds hung there in the air, so beautiful as to inspire terror.

"Condense." Ning willed it. Instantly, the 3600 lotuses began to merge together, soon transforming into a total of thirty-six enormous blood-colored lotus buds.

"Bloom," Ning ordered.

The thirty-six beautiful blood-colored lotus buds slowly began to bloom. Previously, they were absolutely beautiful, but once they bloomed...a boundless aura of murder and slaughter instantly spread out in every direction.

"The bloodlotus blooms only for the sake of slaughter." Ning could sense how tremendously powerful the goldstar beads would be in the

form of these bloodlotus flowers. The Goldstar Beads of the Heavens now had three ideal forms they could assume. The first was the 'bead' form which was the most ordinary and well-rounded. The second was the 'mirror' form which was well-suited for defense. The third was this 'bloodlotus' form which was perfectly suited for slaughter.

The way in which the bloodlotus slaughtered was different from that of ordinary weapons.

"These goldstar beads...although they were formed from valuable materials, the crystals that form from the energy left over after stars perish, it is the Nine Chaos Seals which gives them their true power and makes them truly valuable." Ning understood this. The reason why he became more attuned to fate and could even sense that distant place of endless slaughter was because of these Nine Chaos Seals.

"Daoist Three Purities' 'Immortal Slaying Sword Formation' was derived from the seventh chaos seal. No wonder it is known as the number one killing formation of the Three Realms."

Ning stared at the bloodlotus flowers. His heart was filled with bellowing rage and murder, but he also felt strange, unnatural calm that he had never felt before.

"Hm?" As he was absorbed in the special mental state that came with controlling the bloodlotus flowers, Ning could suddenly sense something special happening within his divine body. His divine body was absolutely perfect and flawless, with every single cell in his body being completely without blemishes. However...right now, Ning could vaguely sense that every single part of his body was filled with desire. An extremely powerful desire.

It was...as though his body was starving.

This sensation was very vague, and Ning could just barely feel it. But suddenly, a thought entered Ning's mind. He murmured softly, "It is said in the [Solitary World God] that one needs to find a spark of inspiration from your own body in the midst of solitude. If you find it, you'll be able to step into the True God level."

“It seems that my body was ready long ago. It has been starving...but in the past, I simply couldn’t sense it. I had no idea as to what I should do.”

“But now...I’ve found it.”

“I’ve found that spark.”

Ning revealed a smile as he softly said these words to himself.

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